

Connecticut Guardian

VOL. 6 NO. 3

HARTFORD, CT

MARCH 2005

TAG unveils bold Recruiting, Retention Plan

Pfc. JOSEPH BROOKS
65TH PCH

On Jan. 5, Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno announced a bold new plan to correct the shortfall of Connecticut National Guard (CTNG) recruiting. Cugno called for the total involvement of all members of CTNG in strength management.

"Our National Guard is in a crisis," said Cugno as he addressed company commanders, recruiters and staff.

The CTNG has seen recruiting shortfalls in the past but not on the scale that it faces today. The CTNG is facing a shortage of more than 1,000 Soldiers and Airmen. To make matters worse, the CTNG is expecting to discharge another 600 Soldiers and Airmen over the next year.

This shortfall presents several problems for the CTNG and for the state of Connecticut. Fewer enlistments create problems for the readiness of units and for the completion of both the state and federal missions, but it has further implications for the state. As a result of the enlistment shortfalls, the CTNG could face a restructuring that would reduce its total force from 4200 Soldiers and Airmen to 3600.

The state would face serious losses if



Maj. Gen William A. Cugno, adjutant general, discusses his plans for recruiting and retention during a briefing at Camp Rell. (Photo by Pfc. Joseph Brooks, 65th PCH)

these recruitment losses continue. Some of the losses Cugno mentioned included a loss of infrastructure including the loss of battalions and the possible loss of the 103rd Fighter Wing in Granby. Other losses would include the loss of federal funding, benefits

and jobs within the CTNG as well as reductions in spending on equipment and facilities.

The biggest loss to Connecticut,

See **RECRUITING** Page 3

Rell proposes improved veterans benefits as part of budget package

Governor M. Jodi Rell proposed new and improved benefits for Connecticut's veterans and active-duty military personnel when she presented her budget plan in February – a package that includes a tax break and a bonus for men and women in uniform deployed in Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere in the war on terrorism.

"This plan helps families whose loved ones are serving overseas or are killed in action," Governor Rell said. "This is a way for us to say 'thank you' to the defenders of our freedom and to those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our nation."

The Governor's plan will:

- Exempt half of veterans' military pensions from the state income tax.
- Dramatically increase the "death benefit." Families with young children would receive \$100,000, plus \$50 a month per child, until the children reach the age of 18. Spouses without children or dependent parents of those killed in action would receive \$50,000. If dependent children are left with no parent, their guardian would receive \$100,000 and \$50 per month per child to care for the children.

- Provide bonuses of \$50 a month to activated National Guard troops serving in Southwest Asia.

"Even during times of fiscal challenges, the state is obligated to recognize those brave men and women who are protecting our country and our rights," Governor Rell said.

"As our Soldiers wage the war on terrorism to keep us safe here at home, we must keep in mind the sacrifices they are making while serving their country.

"The recommendations I am making are a way for the state to honor those brave men and women who are currently serving, those who have served in the past and those who have lost their lives," the Governor said.

"Our Soldiers put their lives on hold when they are deployed – and so do their families. The deployment of our Soldiers brings an added burden to the spouses, children and parents left behind. We can help ease that burden in a financial sense and help families get through times of separation."

They're Home!

A Soldier from the 118th Medical Company gets an embrace from a loved one after returning home from a year in Iraq. See story and more photos on pages 14-15. (Photo by OC Claude Hibbert, CTNG Family Program)



Up Front with the Adjutant General

Celebrating Connecticut's female Soldiers

It was with a great deal of pride and pleasure that I welcomed home the 118th Medical Battalion from their deployment in Iraq last month. They did an outstanding job, representing Connecticut well and providing medical care to thousands of military personnel and civilians while in Iraq.

There's no better feeling than seeing our Soldiers reunited with their families after having been away from them for so long. We must now focus on making their return as seamless as we possibly can, while remaining focused on the fact that we have many more Soldiers still deployed, or preparing to deploy in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

From our nation's beginning to the present, women have answered the call to duty without hesitation. Like their male counterparts, they have put their lives, their goals, and their dreams on hold to serve their nation. Women now hold many positions of leadership within the Armed Forces. This year we would like to take the opportunity to salute the women who have proudly and honorably served our Nation while serving as members of the Connecticut National Guard.

Women today make up 10 percent of the National Guard nationwide, 15 percent of the

Connecticut National Guard, and while they are still not allowed into combat units, they do see combat.

Our own 143rd Military Police Company has many women in its ranks, as do the 248th Engineer Company and Company G, 104th Aviation Regiment, some of whom have been injured doing their jobs. These units have also returned from their missions in Iraq and Afghanistan and the

female Soldiers in the units performed as admirably and honorably as their male counterparts.

Currently, the 208th Personnel Services is in Kuwait, the 143rd Area Support Group and the 141st Medical Company are deployed to Southwest Asia. This summer, the 143rd Forward Support Battalion will deploy a company to Iraq. All of these units have a large number of women serving in their ranks.

We have now sent our first female company commander to war, Capt. Anne-Marie Garcia is leading the 141st Medical Company in Iraq and is doing an admirable job. She recently reported back that her unit is doing well and has settled into their battle rhythm.

Although not a combat unit, their missions will still take them into harm's way, and some of our female Soldiers may be faced with the ultimate sacrifice just as our male Soldiers are. Times and circumstances have changed, and we must be prepared for those changes. Our female Soldiers and Airwomen have shown they can handle those changes, and we must celebrate their courage and their strength.

March is Women's History Month, and on Thursday, March 24th, 2005 the Connecticut National Guard, in conjunction with the United States Postal Service, will host its 2005 Women's History Month Celebration at the Radisson hotel, 100 Berlin Road, Cromwell, Connecticut. The event will take place from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Following the celebration, workshops on Woman's issues will be presented from 10:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

The 2005 theme, "Women Change America," honors and recognizes the role of American women in transforming culture,

history and politics as leaders, writers, scientists, educators, politicians, artists, historians, and informed citizens. "Women Change America" also celebrates the myriad ways in which the spirit, courage, and contributions of American women have added to the vitality, richness, and diversity of American life. I encourage *all* members of the Connecticut National Guard to join us as we celebrate "Women Change America."

Among the speakers is Betty J. Steinberg who will be speaking on how woman have changed Education. Steinberg has served as Commissioner of Education since November of 2003. She is a 24 year veteran of the Connecticut Department of Education where she served as Associate Commissioner of Teaching and Learning from 1992 to 2003. She has been a driving force in developing and implementing programs to strengthen teaching, raise expectations for students' achievement, and enhance curriculum.

Speaking on how woman have changed Business is Barbara Espinosa Occhino, President and Creative Director of Vertex Marketing. As an expert in Advertising and Marketing, she has served as a judge for the Annual Clarion Advertising Awards and the New England News Association Advertising Awards.

I look forward to seeing you all on this very important day as we celebrate the contributions of women in general, and our own female Soldiers and Airwomen in particular.



Maj. Gen.
William A. Cugno
Adjutant General

Connecticut Guardian

360 Broad Street
Hartford, CT 06105-3795
Phone: (860) 548-3251
DSN: 636-7857
FAX: (860) 524-4902

E-Mail:
CTGUARDIAN@ct.ngb.army.mil

Captain-General
Gov. M. Jodi Rell

The Adjutant General
Commanding General, CTNG
Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno

Assistant Adjutant General, CTARNG
Brig. Gen. I. J. Zembrzusi

Assistant Adjutant General, CTANG
Brig. Gen. Thaddeus J. Martin

State Command Sergeant Major
Command Sgt. Maj. Raymond P. Zastaury

State Command Chief Master Sergeant
Chief Master Sgt. Wanda Wawruck

State Public Affairs Officer
Connecticut Guardian Managing Editor
Lt. Col. John Whitford

State Public Affairs NCO
Connecticut Guardian Editor
Layout and Design
Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton

Assistant Layout and Design Editor
Spec. Jesse. J. Stanley

Contributors

Det. 1, 65th Press Camp HQ, CTARNG

Maj. George Worrall, III
103rd FW PAO, CTANG

103rd Air Control Squadron

103rd Communications Flight, CTANG

First Company Governors Horse Guard

Second Company Governors Horse Guard

First Company Governors Foot Guard

Second Company Governors Foot Guard

The *Connecticut Guardian* is an authorized publication for and in the interest of, the personnel of the Connecticut National Guard, State Military Department, State Militia and their families. The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the CTNG Hartford Public Affairs Office and is not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, and the Department of the Army or the Department of the Air Force. The *Connecticut Guardian* is published in accordance with AR 360-1 on the first Friday of every month and is printed by The Day Printing Co., New London, Connecticut, a private firm in no way connected with the Department of the Army.

Deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month preceding the month of publication.

Circulation: 9,000

Perspectives

Non-citizen Soldiers deserve our highest respect



Sgt. Maj. of the Army
Kenneth O. Preston

I want to share a story with you. It is the story of a young, courageous patriot, who came to the United States seeking opportunity and was so thankful for his freedoms,

he chose to join the Army to help defend them. The Soldier's name was Sgt. Catalin Dima. He came to this country to work and start a new life. An Army Reservist with the 411th Engineer Brigade out of New Jersey, Dima felt compelled to join the service with a desire to give back. The 411th was mobilized to rotate into Iraq as part of

Operation Iraqi Freedom II.

I met Dima's roommate and good friend, Sgt. Henry Chin-Hong, while visiting troops in Iraq on August 12 of this year. Dima, a specialist at the time, had asked his roommate to come see me to express some issues he was having getting his paperwork through the immigration process to become an American citizen. He was very anxious to be a U.S. citizen and hoped I could help. Chin-Hong told me the problems and in the weeks after, my staff worked with Immigration and Naturalization Services to help the process along.

On October 3, then Spc. Dima, along with numerous other Soldiers, were sworn in as American citizens in the very palace where Saddam Hussein used to live. Dima was overjoyed. His roommate tells how he

walked into the trailer where they lived that day and wouldn't stop screaming "USA, USA."

Chin-Hong wrote to me shortly after the ceremony to tell me about Dima's great accomplishment. I was overjoyed and humbled that my assistance helped this American Soldier become a citizen of the United States. He deserved it. He was defending the very country and the people he was trying so hard to be a part of.

Dima was the type of individual who followed President Kennedy's famous phrase, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." Chin-Hong told us of the late night stories by Dima and the hardships he

See SMA PRESTON, Page 12

Recruiting, retention focus of bold new plan unveiled by adjutant general: 'It's everybody's job'

From Page 1

however, would not be measurable in dollars and cents. A reduced force and the reduced manpower of the CTNG could have a disastrous result on homeland security. If the size of the CTNG is reduced, it will result in slower response time in emergency situations, less protection of vital or sensitive locations and a reduction in the capabilities to protect Connecticut.

According to Cugno the current crisis did



not spring up overnight. The shortage has been building for years as the CTNG has "become lazy" when it comes to recruiting. The problem according to Cugno is that "recruiting has become a job that's reserved just for the recruiters." He went on to say that there has not been enough emphasis at the company level on recruiting and retention.

Another problem with recruiting over the last few years has been the inability to attract former active duty service members to the guard. In the past, it was more common for a Soldier or Airman who has just come off active duty to join the guard. Many of these Soldiers and Airmen have already deployed at some point during the current war effort and fear being deployed again when they enter the guard.

Cugno did not just focus on the problems that caused the current shortfall; he set out the methods and new tools that the CTNG are going to use to correct the situation. His plan included several bold initiatives to redirect recruiting away from being just a recruiter task and make it the responsibility of the company commanders. He also announced several bold new strategies and new programs that will assist the company commanders in achieving their goal for strength management.

These new tools include two major media initiatives to increase the visibility of the CTNG in the surrounding communities. In an effort to be "...more friendly in selling

our business," Cugno announced the creation of a public access television show highlighting the guard. The format for this show would be similar to a news magazine program featuring news, interviews, pictures and video of the CTNG in action. The program will be a half hour program written, produced and anchored by members of the CTNG and will air on all cable access stations in the state.

The other media initiative is a quarterly news magazine that is directed to high school and college students who may have an interest in joining the guard. The content of the news magazine will be similar to that of the television program and the current CTNG newspaper, *The Connecticut Guardian*, but will feature more stories geared toward enlisting new members from the target audience. The magazine will be specifically timed to correspond with the scheduling of the school year.

Media relations are not the only initiatives set forth by Cugno to solve the recruiting problem.

"As important as it is for us to recruit new members, it's just as important for us to keep the members we already have" said Cugno. He introduced the National Guard Bureau's new bonuses for re-enlistment.

In order to get members of the National Guard to re-up, the National Guard Bureau has announced new re-enlistment bonuses. Any current Soldier or Airman who chooses to re-enlist is entitled to a \$15,000 cash bonus. Airmen have the opportunity to take the cash bonus or to enlist in a Student Loan Repayment Plan. Bonuses have also been increased for those who choose to enlist for the first time and a \$6,000 bonus has been pledged to those members who can complete the requirements to become an officer in the National Guard.

Beyond the bonuses for re-enlistment Cugno made further promises to former members of the National Guard and to members of active duty service who chose to join the guard.

"Many active duty members and former guard members do not re-enlist because they think that right after they enlist they'll be shipped over to Iraq," Cugno said. "I am not going to ship prior service, who have already deployed, for two years after they join."

Cugno pledged to do whatever it takes to give prior service members who have already deployed the necessary time they need to put their lives back in order.

The Deployed Soldier Stabilization Plan as he called it, is not only an effort to try to entice prior-service Soldiers into joining the guard but a way to take care of those who have already done their service to their country and are willing to continue to serve.

Correcting the recruiting problem is not just about incentives and what you can give the

Soldiers or Airmen. It requires finding the potential recruit to begin with.

Cugno announced several steps which are a mixture of new school thought with some old school tactics.

Cugno announced that the paid recruiting force for the CTNG would be doubled. This does not mean that only recruiters will be in the business of recruiting.

"Ninety percent of our junior leaders have not gotten the heart of recruiting" Cugno said.

Cugno stressed that every member of the CTNG is a recruiter whether they are a paid recruiter or not. "It is the job of everybody, from the company commander on down, to get new blood into the Guard."

Cugno closed the meeting with a call for the entire CTNG to change the way it thinks about recruiting.

"I still believe that we are in a crisis; the only way out of this is to make some changes," Cugno said. "It's time for us to get serious about this mission."



Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno makes a point about the importance of every Guardsman being a recruiter. (Photo by Pfc. Joseph Brooks, 65th PCH)

A 2004 National Guard recruiting poster featuring the helmet of NASCAR driver Greg Biffle, driver of the National Guard car.

USJFCOM aids transformational joint, coalition training

COMMANDER
U.S. 2ND FLEET PUBLIC AFFAIRS

(NORFOLK, Va.-Feb. 9, 2005) — The U.S. 2nd Fleet will host a joint U.S. and United Kingdom force in a Multi-Battle Group Inport Exercise (MBGIE) Feb. 7-11. During the exercise, joint forces will replicate a composite warfighting scenario regardless of location.

This is the first time joint (Army and Air Force) and coalition forces will use the Navy's Continuous Training Environment infrastructure and U.S. Joint Forces Command's Joint Training and Experimentation Network, providing real-time simulation aboard ships and with Air Force and Army training simulators.

"This is a great opportunity to demonstrate to a greater audience the technologies that are developing right here on the waterfront," said Vice Adm. Mark P. Fitzgerald, commander, U.S. 2nd Fleet/NATO Striking Fleet Atlantic in Norfolk, Va.

"Implementing these capabilities, we are becoming a much more effective warfighting force."

The MBGIE scenario will encompass 56 hours of continuous wartime planning and execution, and will allow participants the opportunity to train at all levels, promote coordination between warfare commanders, execute joint and combined battle force operations, and familiarize their crews with real-time joint and combined operations simulated in both a high tension and combat environment.

Forces participating in the exercise include:
in Norfolk, Va.:

USS Kearsarge (LHD 3) Expeditionary Strike Group staff, embarked aboard Kearsarge;

U.K. Marine Forces, representing the U.K. battle staff, embarked aboard Kearsarge;

USS Anzio (CG 68); USS Roosevelt (DDG 80); USS Kearsarge (LHD 3); USS Ashland (LSD 48); USS Ponce (LPD 15); USS Normandy (CG 60); USS Gonzalez (DDG 66); USS Kauffman (FFG 59); USS Mitscher

(DDG 57); USS Mahan (DDG 72); USS Hawes (FFG 53); USS Scranton (SSN 756); in Mayport, Fla.: USS John F. Kennedy (CV 67); in

Tinker, Okla., Air Force 552nd Operation Support Squadron; in Niantic, Conn., Air Force 103rd Air Control Squadron; in Fort Bliss, Texas, Army 31st Air Defense Artillery Brigade; and UK-coalition forces in Portsmouth, England, HMS Edinburgh (D97) and HMS Westminster (F 237).

"The important aspect to remember regarding this particular exercise is that we have now included joint and coalition partners as an equal training audience in our simulation environment," said Navy Cmdr. Chris Pieczynski, joint training programs officer for U.S. 2nd Fleet.

"Opening up these opportunities will allow U.S. forces and coalition services to better integrate themselves into the battlespace to become a much more effective fighting force."

"Tomorrow's Navy is technologically advanced with sound operational practice to ensure that when we're called to the fight, we can bring to the front our full capabilities with speed and agility," said Fitzgerald.

Working together with the services, U.S. Joint Forces Command's Joint Training and Experimentation Network is playing a key role in conducting an important warfighting exercise for forces around the world.

Pay hike, expanded military benefits among budget proposals

DONNA MILES
AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE

A 3.1 percent military basic pay hike, higher housing allowances and more healthcare and educational benefits for the National Guard and Reserve are all part of the president's proposed fiscal 2006 defense budget unveiled in Washington in February.

The package of expanded benefits is part of what a senior defense official called a top priority in the president's \$419.3 billion budget request: "taking care of our forces."

"People are our most important asset. We can't do anything without our folks," the official told Pentagon reporters. "Our forces are the best-trained and best-organized on the globe, and we maintain our commitment to them."

The proposed military pay raise reflects a continued trend in better compensation for servicemembers. Incorporating the 3.1 percent military increase, basic pay will be up 25 percent since fiscal 2001.

In terms of actual money in troops' pockets, the official told reporters the 3.1 percent increase would raise basic pay for members in the lowest enlisted grade from \$12,000 in fiscal 2005 to \$15,000 next year, and that of a second lieutenant or ensign from \$23,000 to \$28,000. Similarly, an E-5 who was earning \$30,000 in base pay in fiscal 2001 will be making \$39,000 under the new budget, she said.

Federal civilian workers would receive a 2.3 percent pay hike.

The proposed budget provides a 4 percent increase in the basic housing allowance to reduce and, ideally, eliminate out-of-pocket costs for servicemembers living in private housing. "In the past, there was as much as an 18 percent out-of-pocket cost for our military," the defense official said.

"And this budget sustains our no-out-of-pocket cost commitment."

The budget also keeps DoD on track in its effort to eliminate all inadequate military family housing units in the United States by fiscal 2007, and worldwide by fiscal 2009. "We are on track" with that effort, the

defense official told reporters.

The proposed budget continues to extend privatization to improve military housing and to maximize DoD housing budgets. By the end of fiscal 2006, the official said, this effort is expected to have produced nearly 172,000 new high-quality family housing units during the past 10 years.

In terms of health care, the proposed budget increases funding for the Defense Health Program, with \$20 billion in direct funding and \$7 billion for military personnel supporting the program. Officials said this funding level will ensure continuing good health care for servicemembers and their families.

Guard and Reserve members will receive additional benefits as well, including expanded Tricare eligibility that provides health coverage up to 90 days before activation and 180 days after mobilization for most members. "This is a significant new benefit," the defense official said.

The budget also includes the GI Bill for Reservists, passed by Congress last year, to provide educational benefits for Guard and Reserve members who have been mobilized. These troops would qualify for up to 36 months of payments, from \$400 to \$800 a month, depending on the length of active service in support of a contingency operation.

Provisions for quality facilities also are also included in the budget package.

The proposed budget funds 92 percent of maintenance requirements.

"So I think what we have here is a healthy benefit package," the official summarized. "We want to maintain our commitment to the forces of the United States."



Air Force Flag history explained

STAFFSGT. CAROLYN A. ASELTON
103RD FIGHTER WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The United States Air Force flag incorporates the Air Force seal, established in 1947, on blue background.

The original seal design had a green background and featured the Wright Brothers' aircraft in the center. A panel of high-ranking Air Force officers reviewed it and recommended the background change to blue and a symbolic design replace the aircraft.

Arthur E. DuBois of the Army Quartermaster General's office, who designed the first seal, revamped the design and President Truman approved it.

The gold and ultramarine colors used in the seal are

the Air Force colors carried down from the U.S. Army Air Corps. The 13 stars represent the original 13 colonies. The grouping of three stars at the top of the design portrays the Army, Navy, and Air Force.

The crest includes the bald eagle, which is the symbol of the United States and of air striking power. The cloud formation depicts the creation of a new firmament, and the wreath, composed of six alternate folds of silver and blue, incorporate the colors of the basic shield design.

The shield is divided by a nebula line formation, representing clouds, and the heraldic thunderbolt portrays striking power in the medium of air.



The United States Air Force flag is full of historical symbolism.

Airmen step in for security mission after Soldiers leave

STAFF SGT. CAROLYN A. ASELTON
103RD FIGHTER WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS NCOIC

BRADLEY AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, East Granby – Connecticut Airmen went on orders recently to provide security here through a national program which began after Sept. 11.

Members of the security police squadron, as well as personnel from units across the base and the 103rd Air Control Squadron in Orange, filled 31 augmentee positions beginning in November.

"I thought it would be a lot of checking IDs at the base," said Airman 1st Class Seth C. Garceau, satellite communications apprentice, 103rd Air Control Squadron, one of the security forces augmentees. "It's a lot more in-depth than that."

The augmentees perform limited, but varied security details, including flightline patrol, perimeter patrol, gate assistance and controller work. The augmentees are rotated among different 8-hour shifts throughout the 24-hour, 7-day-a-week security coverage needed on base.

Airmen like Garceau, whose primary training is in a career field other than security, fill roughly half of the positions in the Air Reserve Component (ARC) Augmentee Program.

"Working as a cop gives you a whole new perspective to what they do," he said.

That perspective is one of the benefits of the program, said Senior Master Sgt. Timothy R. Shaw, operations superintendent, 103rd Security Forces Squadron.

"When they go back to their units, they can maybe appreciate the job that we have and maybe give us a break next time," he said. "They can understand us a little bit more."

In addition, Shaw said the program, which usually pairs an augmentee with a security forces Airman, has his cops taking "a little bit more pride" in their work.

The Airmen who come from the non-security career fields underwent a week of security training that included M-16 qualification. They learned armed use of force, baton, pepper spray, challenging, and patrol procedures.

Garceau said he enjoyed the initial training and the ongoing exercises in which he participates to improve his security skills.

"These guys are doing a great job. They have come in and melded. They worked in real well with our guys."

Senior Master Sgt. Timothy R. Shaw

"Doing this is definitely a confidence builder," he said. He does not halt people in his primary career field, but here had to learn how to use a "booming" voice to do just that.

"I notice an improvement with myself," he said.

Garceau began the assignment five days after completing basic, technical and on-

the-job training for his primary job.

"I like being active duty," he said. "It feels good to put on a uniform and go to work in the morning."

Senior Airman Jessica L. Roy, security forces journeyman, 103rd Security Forces Squadron, took a leave of absence from her job as a judicial marshal for the state to fill one of the augmentee positions.

"It's a great experience. It's nice to train people," she said.

Because they were familiar with Air Force procedures, Shaw said training the Airmen was quite different than training the Soldiers who had the security duty for two years.

"Even though they are not cops, they know what the flightline is. They know what our standards are for line badges and security. They know weapon-handling procedure for the Air Force," he said.

Despite the differences, one thing was universal—friendships between those who spent long hours together in a vehicle. Shaw said some of the Soldiers stop by the base every so often and even joined the cops for their holiday party, something the new group of augmentees will likely continue.

"I did not really know what anyone else did," Garceau said. "We are making really good friends."

Shaw said he is appreciative of the help his section has received.

"These guys are doing a great job. They have come in and melded. They worked in real well with our guys," he said.



Airman 1st Class Seth C. Garceau, security forces augmentee, 103rd Air Control Squadron, checks Master Sgt. Scott D. Brew's, computer network switching and cryptographic systems technician, 103rd Communications Flight, line badge to verify he is authorized to work in the restricted area of the flightline on base Feb. 13. Garceau is learning security procedures in his temporary duty providing homeland security support. Working with Brew is Staff Sgt. Richard J. Mack, computer network switching and cryptographic systems technician, 103rd Communications Flight. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Carolyn A. Aselton)



Airman 1st Class Seth C. Garceau, security forces augmentee, 103rd Air Control Squadron, and Senior Airman Jessica L. Roy, security forces journeyman, 103rd Security Forces Squadron, approach unit members working on the flightline Feb. 13. Garceau's primary duty is in satellite communications but he is working a security detail at Bradley on temporary duty through a national program which provides additional manning for homeland security. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Carolyn A. Aselton)

Thoughts from the Frontline

SPEC. MATT AIELLO
141 MEDICAL COMPANY (GA)OIF III

I've made it through the elections without too much trouble. There was definitely much more action around here.

There were about 50 percent more patients at the Combat Support Hospital (CSH) throughout the weekend.

I however, was at FOB (Forward Operating Base) Orion with Staff Sgt. Lopez supporting their battalion aid station. We didn't see much action.

We almost had a huge mass casualty when we heard over the radio that a Chinook went down somewhere near our FOB. We were about to be dispatched to the crash site by a Blackhawk seeing as a Chinook can hold up to like 25 Soldiers or something like that. Long story short, I never got to play because they radioed back saying that all Chinooks were accounted for.

For the longest time I have felt sort of unmotivated as to why we are here. I know we are trying to bring democracy and all that, but I used to think, "maybe they just don't want it."

My only motivation was that I was here to help Soldiers and watch the back of the guy next to me.

My mind has changed however. Part of my everyday duties is to pickup Iraqi patients from the front gate, and bring them to the CSH if they have an appointment. The only way Iraqis get treated at our CSH is if a Blackhawk flies them in after a trauma. Medical emergencies are not brought to us, unless it is a U.S. citizen or serviceman.

The Iraqis we pick up have follow-up

appointments. But the gate is always packed with civilians trying to get in for treatment. The MPs at the gate tell them no, but they want to hear it from somebody with a stethoscope around their neck.

It is very unpleasant for me to send these people away, but who comes in and out is above my pay grade. Today I had to explain (though an interpreter) to a man that his son with TB could not be seen here at our hospital.

The boy was 9, he appeared malnourished and sickly. He also had that terrible cough. I told the father he should go to Balad Hospital. He explained to me that he already did and they would not treat him because his family was too poor.

The civilian hospitals over here will not treat anybody without money. In the states we at least stabilize the patients without money or insurance, but here they do nothing. Back home I know there are ways for sick people to get treatment, even if they are poor.

So at that point I changed my mind. If bringing democracy over here will give the Iraqis a better medical system, than I am glad we are here. I am glad I am here making a difference. It may not be worth even the life of one Soldier, but it is definitely worth our time and the hardships we go through.

If I can, I would like to try to set up some sort of fund or charity. With the proceeds going to at least one child who needs medicine. Depending on if I can do it and how much money I can raise, maybe we can even help a few more children.

I'll let you all know if I can make something happen.



A sunrise at FOB Orion. (Photo courtesy of Spec. Matt Aiello, 141st Medical Co.)



Spec. Matt Aiello stands by a tank in Iraq. (Photo courtesy Spec. Matt Aiello, 141st Medical Co.)



An Iraqi father, his two sons and Spec. Matt Aiello. The boy in the white was Aiello's interpreter. He is 11 and speaks perfect English as well as Arabic. He interpreted while Aiello spoke to the father of the boy with TB. He gave him some candy for being so helpful and told him to share with his brother. He told Aiello he wouldn't share because his little brother didn't do anything because he doesn't speak English. Aiello took the candy back. He begged and said he would share so Aiello gave it back to him. He said it's something he could imagine doing to his younger brothers. Even in Iraq an 11-year-old boy is still a wise. (Photo courtesy Spec. Matt Aiello, 141st Medical)

The 208th mission to Kuwait

Sgt. JEFF AUSTIN
208th PERSONNEL SERVICE DETACHMENT

The State of Connecticut continues to send its sons and daughters to dangerous regions to win the fight against global terrorism. One of the most recent units to deploy into a "Danger Area" is the 208th Personnel Service Detachment (PSD) from New London.

The 208th PSD has been scheduled to stay 12 months at Camp Doha, Kuwait located in the Iraqi Theater of Operations. Soldiers landed December 16 at the Kuwait International Airport and began their mission right away.

However, it has taken months of planning and training for a mission of this kind to prepare Soldiers for the challenges ahead.

"This unit spent its entire two week advance training (AT) period preparing for this mission. Classes discussing basic skills as Common Task and Test (CTT) first aid, employing grenades and communications were used to refresh skills that may have been forgotten," according to Master Sgt. Dwight J. Frederick, 208th Personnel Service Detachment, first sergeant.

There was a dinner for Soldiers, their families and friends, as a time to say good-byes and give best wishes to all Soldiers deploying to Kuwait.

"It was a good dinner with my family: my dad, step-mom and siblings," said Sgt. Priscilla E. Perry, 208th Personnel Service Detachment, human resources specialist.

The Soldiers departed Nov. 1 from Bradley International Airport and traveled to Fort Benning, Ga. to get supplies and equipment and to receive additional combat training.

Soldiers trained long hours - approximately 14 to 16 hours a day - for more than five weeks. The training included classes such as Combat Life Saver, Clearing Mines and Weapons Discipline and Reflexive Firing Techniques just to name a few.

"It was good training. We had to practice

to get efficient," said Richard O. Bamfo, 208th Personnel Service Detachment, human resources specialist. "The hands-on training was a good experience."

While the main body of the 208th PSD was training at Fort Benning, six other volunteers were attending school at Fort Jackson, S.C. for their new military occupational specialty (MOS) in order to make the trip to Kuwait. They worked 12 hour days for six weeks and once they completed the training it was on to Fort Benning, GA to catch up with the rest of the unit and continue training.

A typical training day at Fort Benning included a 5 a.m. wake-up, followed by breakfast and a formation to prepare Soldiers for travel to the training site.

The training day would usually consist of long hours in the field under various weather conditions. Sometimes Soldiers trained in drenching rain for hours while other times training was conducted in relative high heat conditions.

Classes such as Urban Operations tested Soldiers planning, maneuvering and teamwork. Soldiers were first shown on how to defeat an enemy in an urban setting then they were directed to perform the task; and after the task, an After Action Review (AAR) was conducted to discuss the team's weakness and strengths.

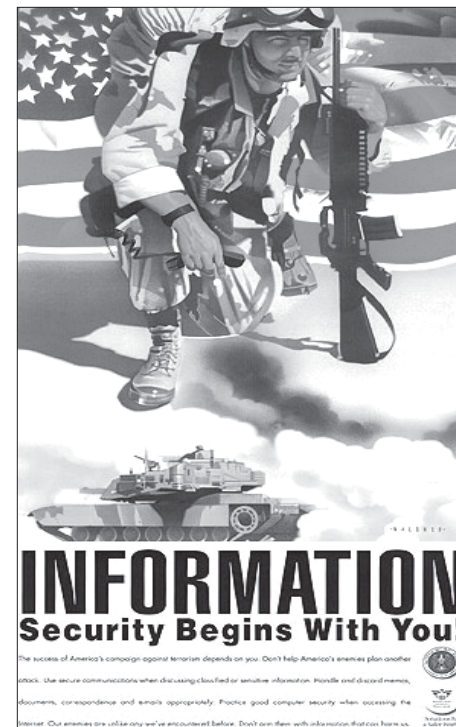
Once all the required paperwork, medical issues and military training were completed, the 208th PSD then moved to the Augusta airport for the flight to Kuwait.

However, before arriving at the airport and leaving for Kuwait Maj. General William A. Cugno, adjutant general and State Command Sgt. Maj. Raymond Zastaury surprised the Soldiers by meeting them for a sponsored dinner at an Augusta restaurant. Cugno and Zastaury spoke with the Soldiers individually about the mission and discussed any problems Soldiers may have with their families.

"I didn't expect to see anyone from our home-state, it was a nice surprise. It was nice

to know that our state supports us and it was a really great dinner and I miss my daughter," said Spc. Vilaysith Chanthavong, 208th Personnel Service Detachment, personnel service specialist.

The 208th PSD has begun their mission of providing personnel support to all servicemembers in the Iraqi Theater of Operations. More reports from Kuwait will be forthcoming.



Connecticut Soldier extends enlistment in Kuwait



On 2 February, Sgt. Seifu Kassa, a member of the 208th Personnel Service Detachment out of New London, currently stationed at Camp Doha, Kuwait in Support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, made the ultimate decision and chose to re-enlist in the National Guard for three more years. Kassa, who is originally from Ethiopia and is a resident of East Hartford, stated that he had many reasons for re-enlisting. Those reasons included to serve the great people of Connecticut, the United States, and to continue to serve alongside his fellow soldiers of the 208th. Kassa stated that he really hopes that the next time he gets to raise his right hand; it will be at his swearing in as an American Citizen with his fellow Soldiers/friends watching him fulfill his long time dream. The re-enlistment ceremony was conducted with the unit present and the Oath was administered by the Capt. Jeremy Lingenfelter, Commanding Officer of the 208th PSD. Lingenfelter also presented Kassa with the ceremonial flag.
(Submitted by: Sgt. Dennis Beckloff 208th PSD)

Air Force clarifies winter uniform issues

SENIOR MASTER SGT. TONY CALDWELL
SUPT, AMC FIELD OPERATIONS

Due to the recent change in weather in some areas, we have received a number of inquiries regarding the color of scarf that is authorized for wear. Please be advised that although the uniform board has tentatively approved the black scarf for wear with all uniform combinations, the "gray" scarf is the only one authorized at this time. We received confirmation from Air Staff and based on the number of gray scarves that remain in the inventory of the military clothing sales stores, there is no push to start authorizing the black one at this time.

The new metallic nametag must be worn on pullover sweaters on the wearer's right side with the bottom of the nametag level

centered between the middle of the sleeve seam and the seam of the neckline. However, it will not be worn on the cardigan sweater.

A reminder regarding cell phones and PDAs: Must be solid conservative color: black, silver, dark blue, or gray. Devices that are two-tone will be covered in a black case. Only one may be worn on the uniform belt, clipped to the waistband or purse or carried in left hand. The hands-free headset is not authorized and cell phones will not be used while walking in uniform.

Finally, the yellow Lance Armstrong "Live Strong" bracelets are not authorized for wear while in uniform. Although this is a noble cause, the bracelets do not meet the conservative criteria outlined in AFI 36-2903.

ASG experiences 'non-standard' deployment

CAPT. JOSEPH J. MCGOWAN JR.
COMMANDER - HEADQUARTERS DETACHMENT
JOINT AREA SUPPORT GROUP-CENTRAL (PROVISIONAL)
US MISSION-BAGHDAD

As deployments go, the 143rd Area Support Group's has been "non-standard" from the beginning. When we received our alert notification during annual training in July 2004, we all assumed that when we deployed we would be performing our doctrinal Logistics and command and control mission.

As our mobilization date drew closer we received more information on our mission. We would be serving as part of the Joint Area Support Group in the International Zone in Baghdad. The mission would be an historic one. Our unit would provide support to the U.S. Embassy and coalition troops in the IZ. The embassy needed support because it was unable to support itself in a combat zone. To our knowledge it is the only time in history a National Guard unit has performed this type of mission.

When we were briefed on the mission and its requirements, it became clear that we did not have all the types of Soldiers we would need to be successful. Our MTOE is based on a logistics mission. We would need subject matter experts in many fields that our unit did not have. A call when out to units with the MOS's we needed. Soldiers from units all over the state responded. We needed Engineers, Aviation, Information Technology, and additional Logistics and Administrative people. The 242 ENG BN, HQ STARC, 248th ENG CO, 192nd ENG BN, 169th AVN, G/126th AVN, 85th Troop Command and the 143rd FSB all provided volunteers. Many were veterans of the Desert Storm, Bosnia rotations, and even OIF 1. We welcomed their skills and experience.

If we thought we were a sort of joint / Provisional unit when we left Connecticut, we soon found out what those terms really meant. The JASG-C (P) is a truly joint command.

It is a 133 person unit comprised of service members from all four branches of the military. Our higher headquarters, with whom we work

closely with every day, is Multi-National Force, Iraq. (MNF-I). They are comprised of all four branches of the U.S. military, and have representatives from coalition forces.

It is a truly unique environment to work in and has been likened to working in the Pentagon, Southwest Asian branch.

The unit and individual accomplishments to date have been very impressive. The JASG

was severely short-handed when we arrived. Most of us fell in on positions that were not currently filled or had never been filled. In many cases we had to start from scratch and build policies, SOPs, and TTPs. We also had to establish working relationships with military people from other branches of the service and other countries. We had to earn the respect of Iraqi nationals who make up the work parties we supervise. All of these tasks had to be performed as quickly as possible. The unit hit the ground running and hasn't stopped for the last 90 days.

As the Headquarters Company Commander I am extremely proud that three Soldiers of the 143rd have been selected for the "Warrior in the Arena" distinction since our arrival.

Capt. Charles Jaworski, Spec. (Now Sgt.) Andrew Peterson and Spec. Michelle Dewey were all recognized for their outstanding contributions to mission accomplishment.

I am also especially proud of the level of maturity and professionalism displayed by our younger Soldiers. Spec. Quinn Parker is the military representative in the Community Affairs Directorate. She regularly travels in the IZ and delivers supplies to schools and organizations in need.

Spec. Katie Sweeney is the administrative assistant to the Headquarters Detachment. She has also provided support to the United Nations Coordination section and helped in the Comptrollers office.

Specialists Jake St. Pierre and James

Lorello are the JASG representatives in the Tactical Operations Center. They are entrusted to warn us in the event of indirect fire attacks.

Spec. Elizabeth Offenberg works in Plans and Requirements and regularly helps prepare briefings for presentation to Ambassador and General Officer Levels.

Spec. Kenya Carnegie serves as the administrative assistant for the Group Commander.

Specialists Dean Williams and Andre Martin work in the security Directorate and with minimum supervision control who be granted access to the International Zone.

The duties these Soldiers perform would be challenging to seasoned NCOs. It is especially impressive when you consider that most will celebrate their 21st birthday here in theatre.

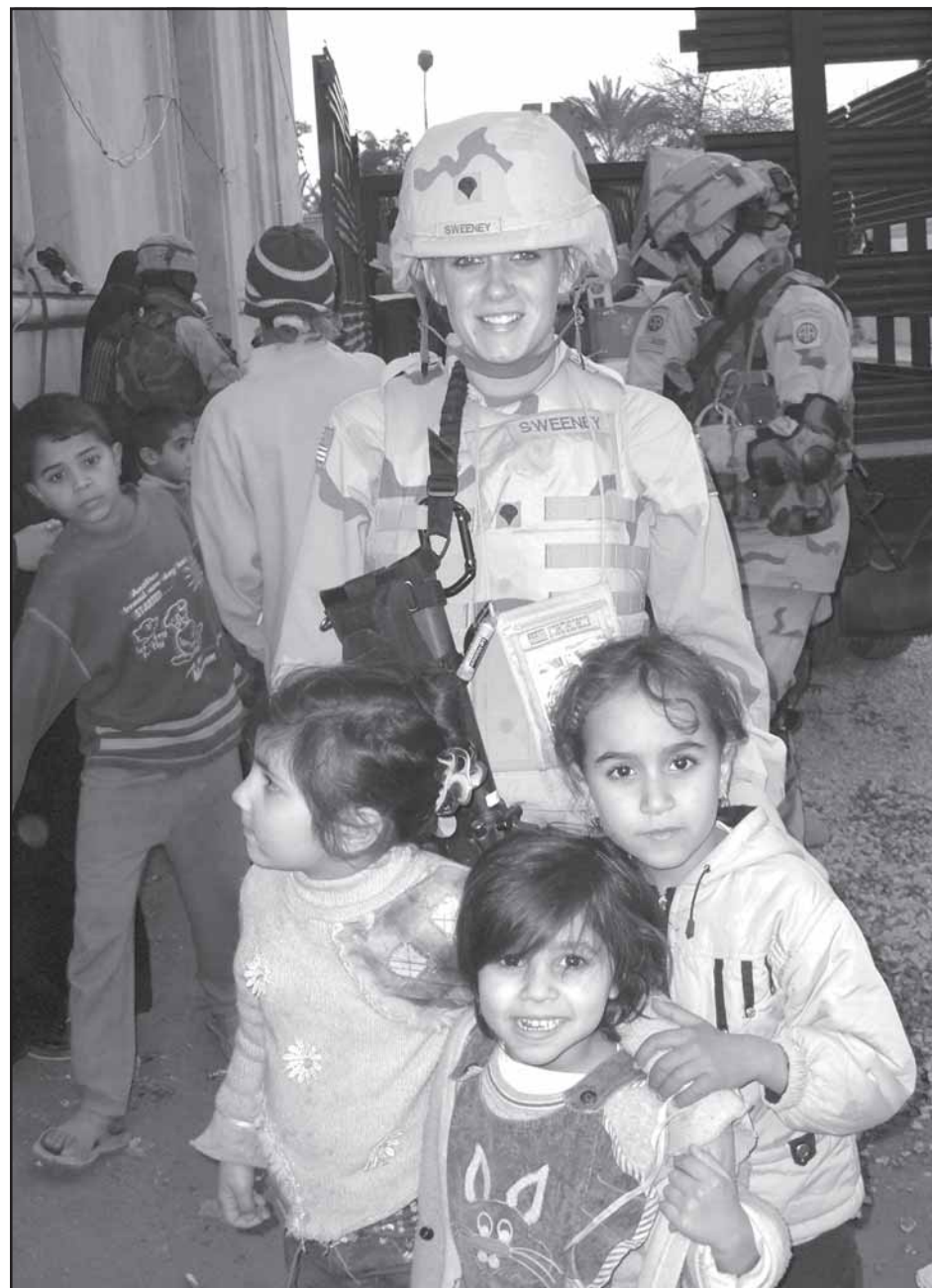
While the 143rd ASG has outstanding younger soldiers, it also has many more "seasoned" ones. Sgt. Maj. Brian Miniter and Sgt. 1st Class Louis DeJesus are veterans

of the Vietnam War. Before we go home Master Sgt. Greg Butko may hold the distinction of being the "most experienced" i.e. oldest Soldier in the AOR. Members of the 143rd have served in the Active Army, Army Reserve, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, Air National Guard, and the United States Marine Corps. Our 84 person unit has more than 1000 years of total cumulative military experience.

As of this writing, our unit has been "on the ground" for three months. We have seen and accomplished much and have the bulk of our tour ahead of us. We have witnessed and supported the first free elections in Iraq's history. We have spent time together in bunkers during mortar attacks. We jumped in Saddam's pool to celebrate the New Year. We survived a rocket attack on the building that we occupy. We have helped to build a unit from the ground up. We are proud of what we have done. We look forward to what we are going to do.



Capt. Bill Daugherty poses with his new friend Mohammad, an Iraqi Police officer at the Iraqi Elections Commission. Many 143rd Soldiers supported the elections in various ways. (Photo courtesy Capt. Joseph J. McGowan Jr., Commander - Headquarters Detachment, Joint Area Support Group-Central (Provisional), US Mission-Baghdad)



Spec. Katie Sweeney stands with a group of Iraqi children. She was part of a detail supporting a humanitarian mission distributing clothes and toys to Iraqi children. (Photo courtesy Capt. Joseph J. McGowan Jr., Commander - Headquarters Detachment, Joint Area Support Group-Central (Provisional), US Mission-Baghdad)

National Guard, USPS celebrate Black History Month

Pfc. Joseph Brooks
65th PCH

On Feb. 10, the Connecticut National Guard, in association with the United States Postal Service and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), hosted the annual Black History Month celebration at the Artists Collective in Hartford.

The event commemorated the Black History Month with a celebration of the advancements and contributions that have been mad by African Americans throughout history. A special focus was given on the contributions of African American in music and community service.

Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno, adjutant general, delivered a message on behalf of the Connecticut National Guard. Cugno celebrated the profound achievements of African Americans in the creation of this country and in the ongoing fight for in the civil rights movement. Cugno paid homage to the contribution that African American has made to the United States in culture, history, and military.

The USPS honors a prominent African American for their contribution to history with a commemorative stamp each year in their Black History Month commemorative stamp series. Marian Anderson was the subject of this year's stamp. The stamp was

unveiled by Cugno and John W. Holden, lead plant manager for the USPS.

Anderson was a historic African American opera singer who was renowned not only for the beauty of her singing but for her ability tear down racial barriers with her songs. She performed with the Metropolitan Opera Company in New York and toured throughout the United States and Europe. She was invited to sing at the Lincoln Memorial by Eleanor Roosevelt in 1939 and became the first woman to do so.

Anderson was a United States delegate to the United Nations, a delegate to Asia for the U.S. State Department and a philanthropist. She received both the National Medal of Arts and the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Anderson moved to Danbury, Connecticut in 1943 where she lived and continued her public service until her death in 1993.

Every year the USPS and the CTNG sponsor an essay contest that is held along side the Black History Month celebration and the stamp unveiling. Student in three different age categories from throughout the state submit essays for a chance to win recognition and a \$200 U.S. savings bond.

The students must also demonstrate academic excellence, outstanding attendance, and community activity. They must also receive two letters of recommendation from their teachers, guidance counselors or principals. Three winners were picked from 132 nominations.

Vashti Clark, Jaime Beaver and Lucindeida Fonseca were awarded for outstanding essays

written as part of an essay-writing contest sponsored by the USPS. Clark, a student at Momaiuguin School, East Haven, was the award-winning essayist for the fifth grade category. Beaver, a student at the East Hartford Middle School, East Hartford, wrote the award winning essay for the

eighth grade category. Fonseca, a senior at Wilby High School, Waterbury, won the award for the high school age group. All three students were presented with certificates from the USPS, a \$200 savings bond, and the Adjutant General's coin for excellence by Cugno.

There are many persons ready to do what is right because in their hearts they know it is right. But they hesitate, waiting for the other fellow to make the first move—and he, in turn, waits for you. The minute a person whose word means a great deal dares to take the open-hearted and courageous way, many others follow. Not everyone can be turned aside from meanness and hatred, but the great majority of Americans is heading in that direction. I have a great belief in the future of my people and my country.

-Marian Anderson



Lucindieda Fonseca reads her award winning essay to audience at the Black History Month celebration. (Photo by Pfc. Joseph Brooks, 65th PCH)



Maj. Gen William A Cugno presents award winner Vashti Clark with the Adjutant General's Coin for Excellence. (Photo by Pfc. Joseph Brooks, 65th PCH)

2005 Soldier, NCO of the Year recognized

SPC. JORDAN E. WERME
65TH PCH

The 2005 Soldier and Non-commissioned Officer of the Year boards were held Feb. 5 at the State Headquarters Armory, Hartford.

Nineteen of the Guard's most exceptional Soldiers spent weeks studying. Those same elite Soldiers agonized over fractions of inches to be sure their uniforms were perfectly presented. And when the last page had been memorized, the last dammit secured, each of the 19 Soldiers gathered to test his mettle against the best of his peers.

After each of the hopeful Soldiers had appeared before the board, two were selected to represent the best that Connecticut has to offer.

Spc. Alan L. Merriman, a helicopter mechanic with Co. G, 104th Aviation took honors as 2005 Soldier of the year, given to the most outstanding enlisted Soldier between the grades of E-1 and E-4.

Sgt. 1st Class Paul W. Vicinus, a basic non-commissioned officer course senior small group leader, 169th Leadership Regt., received

recognition as 2005 NCO of the Year, given to the most outstanding enlisted Soldier grade E-5 or higher.

For Merriman, a member of the Guard for three years, the SOY recognition comes on the heels of a deployment to Afghanistan



Spc. Alan L. Merriman

with the 104th. While on deployment, Merriman received multiple commendations, including two National Defense Medals and the Reserve Component Medal with "M" device. But spending a year in the Middle East didn't prepare him for everything he needed to know for the board.

"It's the first time I ever had to put my Class-A uniform together," said Merriman. "I studied

everything I had. The procedure was new to me, so I was nervous."

A student at the University of Connecticut School of Business, Merriman is no stranger to studying – nor to last-minute notice. When he was told he would be representing the 104th at the board, Merriman seized the opportunity.

"It was somewhat last minute," he said. "I

figured I would do my best, but I expected I would not be as prepared as the other candidates. But I felt competitive. There's a wealth of information, and you can only retain so much. I wanted to present myself well and be confident in the words I said."

For Vicinus, the opportunity to appear before the board was a year overdue.

"I was selected for [the 2004 NCO of the Year] board, but I was unable to participate," said Vicinus. Due to personal matters, Vicinus had to wait for the next chance.

"I felt proud to be selected and to represent the [169th]," said Vicinus. "We have excellent leaders

and Soldiers. I learn as much from them as they learn from me. I have such respect for my peers and the experiences they represent. Now I have the burden of representing them at a higher level. I know that their experiences, collectively, are much greater than mine."

Both Vicinus and Merriman will be representing the Connecticut Guard at the

1st Army North competition in Rhode Island in April.

Representing their peers at such a high level can place a heavy burden on any Soldier's mind, but Vicinus is keeping everything in perspective.

"In no way do I hold this accomplishment above those of other Soldiers," he said, "especially those coming off active duty deployments. Their experience is more valuable than anything I did here today."

The real value for Vicinus is the effect his accomplishment has on his family; wife, Joanie, daughter Brittany, 17, and sons Brandon, 11, and Jacob, 6, have been very supportive of the Soldier.

"My involvement in the Guard is a positive influence on [my children]," he said. "It's something I hope to inspire in them. My wife helped me study for the board, firing questions back and forth. But most importantly, she gave me the time to study."

Merriman has benefited from similar support.

"I'm very happy with the support I've gotten since coming home from deployment," said Merriman. "Support from my mother [Leslie] especially."

Merriman, who also works as a waiter at Max Downtown in Hartford, has also received support from his employer, working with his Guard duties and his school schedule.

But Merriman also has an eye on the future. His girlfriend, Michelle, graduates from Rutgers in May, and will be coming home to Connecticut.

"I'm very excited about the future," he said.

Participation in the board process was invaluable to the Soldiers honored, and continued participation should be encouraged.

"My advice," said Vicinus, "would be for leaders, and junior leaders, to continue developing their Soldiers." Continued sharing of knowledge is the best way to ensure that every Soldier knows what works and has the best possible chance for success, he said.



Sgt. 1st Class Paul Vicinus



Command Sgt. Maj. Duane Haverstock (back to camera) gives candidates for the Soldier and NCO of the Year boards instruction on the procedures to be followed during the interview process. (Photo by Spc. Jordan Werme, 65th PCH)



IED...three letters with explosive impact

Improvised Explosive Devices biggest challenge for Army troops

HQ, FIRST UNITED STATES ARMY
PRESS RELEASE

The Improvised Explosive Device or IED is the single biggest problem for our troops and convoys in Iraq. Priority one for First Army is to train all deploying Soldiers how to detect, deter, prevent, defeat and respond to IEDs.

To that end, First Army Commander Lt. Gen. Russel Honoré and his IED Tiger Team hosted fifty-one expert trainers from the eastern half of the United States at First Army headquarters to collaborate on the best IED training techniques.

Honoré said that the purpose of the conference was to share ideas on how to train Soldiers to adapt to the enemy. "We aren't here to standardize training at this conference," he said. "We are here to enhance and improve what we are already doing. Remember this...the enemy has no standards. The enemy isn't reading a book but is adjusting how he attacks on a daily basis. We must think like that."

IED training has become vitally important for Soldiers deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan. First Army trainers teach Soldiers to expect an IED attack 24-hours a day and that anytime is a good time for an IED strike.

"Soldiers will train at their mobilization stations under theater immersion, an Iraqi-like environment where they are jolted by the noise and explosions of simulated attacks at all times of the day and night. With the lessons taught by the trainers using these conditions, Soldiers will be better prepared," said Capt. Sheree Green, G3 training officer.

For Honoré, this is serious business and he believes the label "improvised" is somewhat misleading. "The word 'improvised' implies that amateurs are throwing these bombs together and haphazardly using them against us," Honoré said. "That is not what we are dealing with. They are more like 'Precision' Explosive Devices. They are precisely placed, precisely timed and precisely designed to cause casualties. The enemy may not use space age technology, but make no mistake, he knows what he is doing."

Methods used by the enemy to detonate an IED can be a simple command detonated device that is hard wired or remote controlled by such common electronic gear as pagers or cell phones. Easily disguised, IEDs can be placed anywhere and are a low-cost method for the maximum yield - in addition to the physical casualties, it is psychological warfare at its most vicious.

Honoré assembled his IED Tiger Team last year to provide a dynamic resource for First Army's trainers. "Because the enemy's tactics are changing on a daily basis, the Tiger Team's focus is to push the latest tactical IED information down to the trainers on the ground at the mobilization stations," said Sgt. First Class Gregory L. Williams Sr., G-3

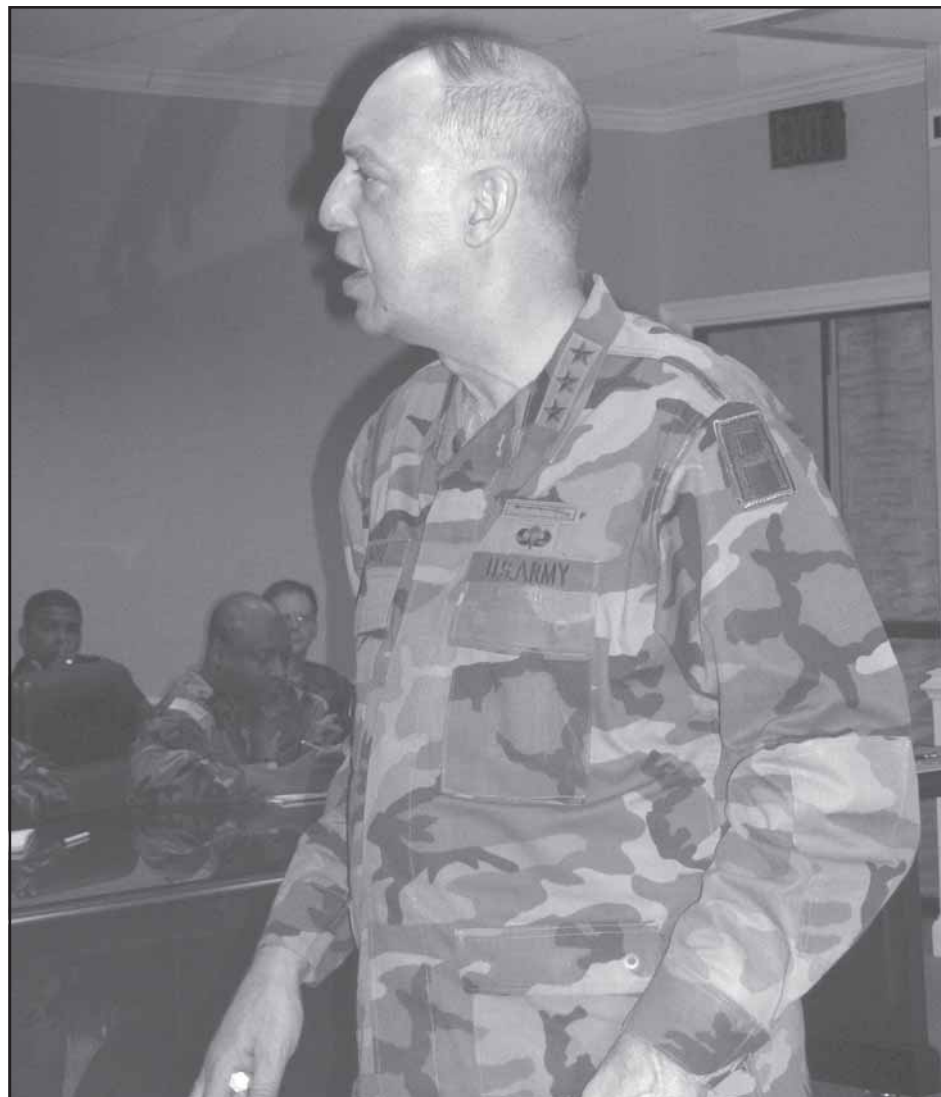
training NCO.

"Our IED Tiger Team is key to keeping the training focus current and based on what is happening in theater," said Lt. Col. Sam Tello, First Army Chief of Training, G3. "Our internal IED newsletter 'Advance Guard' provides important updates weekly."

"Our Soldiers must learn to see first, understand first and act first," Honoré said. "Their actions must become intuitive. It could save their lives and those of their comrades."

They are precisely placed, precisely timed and precisely designed to cause casualties. The enemy may not use space age technology, but make no mistake, he knows what he is doing."

*First Army Commander
Lt. Gen. Russel Honoré*



"Our Soldiers must learn to see first, understand first and act first," said Lt. Gen. Russel Honoré to the trainers at First Army's IED conference. "Their actions must become intuitive. It could save their lives and those of their comrades." (Photo by Karen Bradshaw)



Trainers from First Army converged at the Fort Gillem headquarters to collaborate on their best IED training techniques. IED events are embedded into all training that each deploying Soldier receives. Soldiers must be tested numerous times until their responses become intuitive. (Photo by Karen Bradshaw)

Focus: *Leader development and education*

JOE BURLAS
ARMY NEWS SERVICE

(Editor's note: This is the 14th article in a series on the 17 Army focus areas. This one focuses on "Leader Development and Education.")

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, April 23, 2004) — Today's methods of training and educating the force and growing leaders are effective, but they do need some tweaks to ensure continued success on tomorrow's battlefields, according to the findings of Task Force Leader Development and Education.

Leader Development and Education is one of 17 focus areas directed by Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter Schoomaker to channel Army efforts in winning the global war on terrorism and increasing the Army's relevance and readiness.

"We have what I consider a world-class Army and world-class leaders today — you have to recognize they are products of the (education) system we have in place today," said Brig. Gen. James Hirai, deputy commandant, Army Command and General Staff College. "Recognizing that level of competence, we still need to grow. We need to anticipate and prepare for the unknown."

As part of its charter, the task force reviewed the findings from the officer, warrant officer, noncommissioned officer and civilian Army Training and Leader Development Panel surveys that were conducted over the past few years. The task force validated the majority of those findings, Hirai said.

However, the task force did not limit itself to just validating past studies. It has taken a broad look across the Army, Hirai said. He talked about what the task force has determined to date under several categories:

Lifelong Learning

While the Army has long espoused a culture of lifelong learning in leaders of all levels, accountability for that lifelong learning has not been well defined. The individual Soldier, the organizations the Soldier belongs to during an Army career and the institution itself all have roles to play in that lifelong learning journey, Hirai said. Those roles need to be clearly defined and understood by each player, he continued.

Additionally, there must be some form of formal standards-based assessment and feedback mechanism in place in order to determine if lifelong learning goals are being met and to adapt to changing learning needs or emerging technologies.

High-Payoff Initiatives

The task force is recommending that Army schoolhouses move toward a common scenario based upon today's asymmetrical threat. Working off a common scenario may allow different career field training centers to build synergies in conducting collective joint exercises via linked simulators and computer networks, Hirai said.

Another high-payoff initiative the task force recommends is conducting a formal reoccurring training needs assessment across the Army, Hirai said.

Education System

Task Force Leader Development and Education is also reviewing content delivery and timing of training. Part of that is determining when a Soldier should get resident training and the duration of that training.

"The question is what type and amount of training does the Soldier or leader need to be comfortable with in current and future operations," Hirai said.

Joint operations training is one area that should be done at a lower level than most Army school curriculum — likely at the basic qualification course, the general said.

"Joint interoperability, joint operations (training), is not at the right level," Hirai said. "We are finding in the contemporary operating environment today that joint operations are done by junior leaders."

Not all institutional training may need to be done at the schoolhouse, Hirai said, especially with off-the-shelf technology that allows for more distance education than available 10 years ago.

Leveraging Technologies

Leveraging technologies includes distance learning via linked simulators and distance learning via the Web, but it is more.

"We are looking at the human dimension — how people learn," Hirai said. "It's about identifying what leaders and Soldiers have to do and how to most effectively deliver the training they need to do those tasks."

Single Education Proponent

Agreeing wholeheartedly with the Civilian Army Training and Leader Development Panel finding, the task force is recommending a single education proponent for all Soldier and Department of the Army civilian training.

Under the current system, civilian training is managed through the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, G1, with major commands footing the bill. Soldier training Chief of Staff for Operations, G3, responsibility, with the Human Resource Command paying travel and other costs.

Hirai said he envisions a single organization responsible for managing the training of both the military and civilian workforces. Whatever that organization ends up being, it would still need to coordinate with G1 and G3 to ensure legal mandates are met.

As far as civilian leader development, Hirai said there are many courses out there, but none tied to career progression. The task force recommends the Army establish a specific civilian leader development program.

Integration

The Leader Development and Education Task Force has been in close contact with the other area task forces, Hirai said, as what each finds often impacts other areas.

The focus areas are all linked and all designed to improve the readiness of the Army. When one of the other task forces recommends a new piece of equipment or process, Army training will play a role in ensuring Soldiers know how to use that equipment or procedure, Hirai said.

"Current and past leader development and education programs have served our nation very well," Hirai said. "Our leaders, in fact, have been pretty well prepared to plan and execute complicated operations in combat. We are building on success."

(Editor's note: The Army's 17 immediate areas offocus include: The Soldier; The Bench; Combat Training Centers/Battle Command Training Program; Leader Development and Education; Army Aviation; Current to Future Force; The Network; Modularity; Active Component/ Reserve Component Balance; Force Stabilization; Actionable Intelligence; Installations as Flagships; Authorities, Responsibilities, and Accountability; Resource Processes; Strategic Communications; Joint Expeditionary Army with a Campaign-quality Capability; and Logistics. To view a brief synopsis of each area, visit *The Way Ahead*.)

SMA Preston gives his Perspective

From Page 2

suffered in his native Romania. Dima would talk about how as a Soldier in the Romanian Army, he would have to deliver pizzas at night and live in a basement with his family. Dima couldn't understand why natural-born Americans weren't just walking on air with all the opportunities they had available to them. Chin-Hong recalls Dima telling him that he loved President Bush and would vote for him forever if it were possible because the

President allowed him to become a member of the greatest society the world has ever known.

I received an email from Chin-Hong a few weeks ago. He wanted to inform me

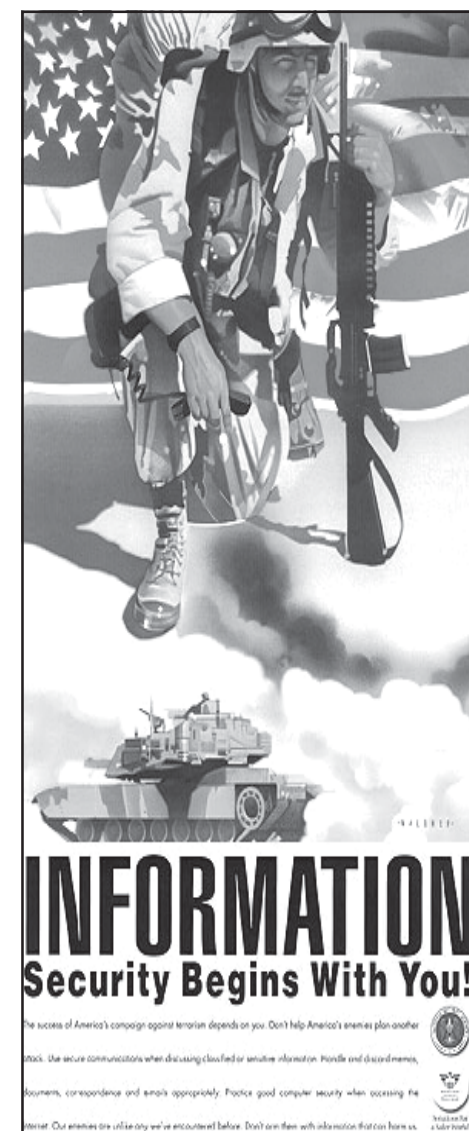
that Dima had been promoted to sergeant on November 11. He also wanted me to know that Dima died that same afternoon from wounds suffered in a mortar attack on his convoy. His best friend, Chin-Hong was injured as well but survived his wounds.

Dima left behind his wife Florika and three children, Christian, Angela and John. All are under six years of age.

He gave more in his 39 days of citizenship than most Americans give in their whole lives. He is an American hero. He deserves to be remembered and recognized with all the great heroes of this century. He lived the Soldiers Creed and the Warrior Ethos everyday. He always placed the mission first, never accepted defeat, never quit, and never left a fallen comrade. He was an expert and a professional. He was, an American Soldier.

Today, 14,921 of our Soldiers are not U.S. citizens. Many of them are working on their citizenship. Many of them are also in harm's way, serving alongside their 280,000 brothers and sisters in arms in more than 120 countries worldwide. These heroes have chosen to defend their adopted country against all enemies, foreign and domestic. They've committed to serving the people of the United States and living the Army values. They deserve our highest respect. Those of us lucky enough to be born under the stars and stripes can learn something from these great Soldiers.

For me, Sgt. Catalin Dima will forever be remembered and honored as a great American hero. I only wish I had been given the opportunity to meet him face-to-face to tell him so.



Connecticut Military Department News

2nd Company Governor's Horse Guard announces 2005 Spring and Fall Recruit Classes

CPL. CHRISTINE JOHNSON
PUBLIC AFFAIRS NCO

The Second Company Governor's Horse Guard is accepting applications for new riding and non-riding members interested in joining one of the oldest, continuously serving cavalry units in the country.

New recruit classes begin in April and October of 2005, and riding or military experience is not required.

Prospective members interested in joining the spring or fall sessions must be at least 18 and in good physical condition. Spring and fall sessions last 24 weeks scheduled (spring) April 16 – September 29, 2005 and (fall) October 8, 2005 – April 4, 2006. Recruit training consists of military drill and ceremony, cavalry horsemanship,

and horse care. Downloadable applications are available at www.thehorseguard.com or can be acquired during drill on Sundays between 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at the horse guard headquarters located across from the Old Fairfield Hospital on 4 Wildlife Drive in Newtown, Connecticut.

"We have active members in the guard who travel from across all parts of Connecticut so we invite anyone interested to join us," said Cpl. Christine Johnson, spokesperson. Those interested are encouraged to act quickly, as space is limited in both sessions. Limited space is available for the spring session. Applications must be completed and returned no later than March 16, 2005. Fall session applications deadline is September 8, 2004 with a fall "Recruit Open House" schedule on July

16, 2005 beginning at 10:00 a.m.

Chartered in 1808, "Second Horse" is one of four state active, militia units in Connecticut with 32 horses and 40 active members. Troopers participate in parades, events, are provided with professional riding instructions and enjoy the freedom to ride on their own time. For more information contact Staff Sgt. Paul Mazzara, (203) 410-7334.



Dance to the sounds of the Big Bands

LT. COL. PAMELA K. TITUS
JFHQ PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Second Company Governor's Foot Guard 17-piece Band will be holding a benefit dance for the Connecticut National Guard Foundation on Friday, March 11, 2005 in Wallingford.

The band will play Big Band era arrangements as well as music favorites for all ages.

The event will be held at Zandri's Stillwood Inn, 1074 South Colony Road, Wallingford, Conn. from 7:00 to 11:00 p.m.

The \$20 admission includes snacks and hors d'oeuvres. A variety of beverages and pastries can also be purchased.

The Connecticut National Guard Foundation was established to provide temporary financial help for Connecticut National Guard families for items such as clothing, food, medical and surgical aid, scholarship assistance and general care and relief.

Additional details on the event are available through CW4 John J. DePastino (203) 757-4113 (email jjdep@hotmail.com) or Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Nuzzo (203) 469-6986 (email Jnuzzo@snet.net).

NGACT
is looking
for
people to
run for
its
**Executive
Board.**

If
interested,
call (860)

Connecticut National Guard Foundation Inc

The Connecticut National Guard Foundation Inc announces its 2005 scholarship program. This year the foundation will award a total of **four** scholarships.

1. A **single \$2500.00 scholarship honoring SGT Felix Delgreco Jr.** will be awarded to a son or daughter of a member of the Connecticut ARMY National Guard.
2. **Three \$1500.00 scholarships** will be awarded to Connecticut National Guard and Organized Militia members or their sons, daughters, or spouses.

Application forms may be found on the Foundations web site at: www.ctngfoundation.org

Additional Information:

1. Complete application packets must be postmarked no later than **April 30, 2005**
2. The selection committee will choose students based on achievement and citizenship
3. You must be enrolled in, or planning to attend a regionally or nationally accredited degree or technical program
4. Mail application form and completed package to:

CTNG Foundation Inc.
Attn: Scholarship Committee
360 Broad Street, Hartford Armory
Hartford, CT 06115

5. Please contact the foundation at (860) 241 1550 or e-mail ctngfi@sbcglobal.net for further details.

Medics heal hearts with their return

Spc. JESSE STANLEY
65th PCH

After more than a year on active duty, 110 Soldiers of the 118th Medical Battalion landed at Fort Drum, New York, Feb. 3. As the Soldiers disembarked their plane they cheered and proudly assembled their guidon before heading into the receiving area. As they celebrated arriving in the United States several small snowball fights broke out among the Soldiers.

"From the frying pan into the freezer," Spc. Steve Martin joked. "I am really glad to be home."

The 118th was mobilized in November 2003 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. They left Fort Drum in December 2003 and processed through Kuwait on their way to Iraq.

The 118th Medical Battalion provided non-

surgical medical care and evacuation while stationed at various locations throughout Iraq.

"This is the best part of my life," Maj. Gen. William H. "Bill" H. Slater, adjutant general, said. "The 118th did an outstanding job."

After they reached Fort Drum, they went through demobilization and returned to their families in Connecticut. The 118th arrived at Newington High School on Feb. 10 at Newington High School.

"A little weight was lifted off my shoulders when I found out they had reached Drum," Sandra Slater said as she waited at Newington High School. "The long day coming."

When the announcement came that the unit had reached Fort Drum, Massachusetts, a cheer erupted.



Members of the 118th Medical Battalion, led by commander Lt. Col. Bob Cody, are greeted as they step off the plane at Fort Drum. It was their first step on U.S. soil as a unit in more than a year. (Photo by Jesse J. Stanley, 65th PCH)



The Soldiers of the 118th Medical Battalion begin their out process upon arrival at Fort Drum, N.Y. The Soldiers received a briefing on what would happen during their stay at the New York facility before traveling to Connecticut and their eagerly awaiting families. (Photo by Spc. Jesse J. Stanley, 65th PCH)



In stark contrast to the desert they were serving in, the Soldiers of the 118th Medical Battalion found themselves in a snowy, cold environment.

area medical
d in various
job, bringing
William Cugno,
18th has done
drum the unit
and returned
nt on February
l.
fted off my
ut they had
e, wife of Maj.
ted anxiously
“Today was a
came that the
Springfield,
upted in the

auditorium.
“I don’t think I was this nervous on my wedding day,” Slater said.
Her son, DJ, and daughter Kye, ages 10 and 4 were excited to see their father as well.
“It was kinda weird,” said DJ. “It was a long time not to see my dad.”
As the time went on people checked their watches more often and speculated how long it would take the unit to get there. Once they reached the Connecticut border the busses would be met by state police and escorted to the school.
Elena Tamayo knitted while she waited for her boyfriend Sgt. Kurt Heitz to return.
“It has been tough,” Tamayo said. “It is hard to be away from someone for so long. For a while I cried every time I saw a yellow ribbon on a car.”
Every soldier who left on the deployment

left a void somewhere that will now be filled with their return. Elena Tamayo has her boyfriend back, Sandra Slater has her husband and DJ his father. Also with Slater’s return, the students at Hall High School have their principle back. Lt. Col. Richard Young will go back to Saint Raphael’s Hospital. In total more than 100 voids will be filled with the units’ return. Husbands, wives, brothers and sisters were reunited more than a year after they left.
“You remember the last goodbye and you feel like this day is never going to come,” Tamayo said. “This day has been surreal.”
As the Soldiers got off their busses the crowd of family, friends and loved ones cheered. Suddenly people were running into each other’s arms and tears flowed down faces. No matter where one turned there was a family sharing a first embrace in more

than a year.
Elena and Sgt. Heitz held each other for a long time when they finally found each other in the crowd.
“I cannot believe this day finally came,” said Heitz.
More than 100 families there shared that same sentiment as they shared embraces that were more than a year in waiting.



and themselves in a winter wonderland upon their return to the United States. (Photo by Spc. Jesse J. Stanley, 65th PCH)

Recruiting & Retention: Mission One

ROTC offers opportunities to serve country, state through simultaneous membership

STAFF SGT. STEVE MARKOWSKI
65TH PCH

With the cost of a college education continuing to rise, the Connecticut National Guard continues to offer options for students who want to serve their country and state while preparing for their civilian careers.

If the benefits available to Connecticut Guard members are not quite enough, relief can be spelled ROTC. National Guard members who are looking for financial assistance beyond the tuition waiver, tuition assistance and the G.I. Bill have another option – Reserve Officer Training Course.

The purpose of the Army ROTC is not to provide funding for educational opportunities. But, that is a main advantage of a program whose stated purpose is to commission the future leadership of the U.S. Army.

“This program’s best audience is a full-time college student,” said Sgt. Maj. Rob Roy, operations sergeant for the University of Connecticut Army ROTC Nathan Hale Battalion. “This would be someone who is going to school and may or may not be in the National Guard already.”

The Simultaneous Membership Program allows an ROTC cadet to drill with a Reserve Component while enrolled in ROTC. This offers several advantages, Roy said.

“It’s easier to get what you want as an SMP,” Roy said, stressing that SMPs are more likely to be commissioned in a branch that is most desirable to the individual. But, he said there are other advantages for cadets who drill with Guard units. “Being an SMP, it makes a cadet more competitive because that cadet will get more experience.”

SMP participants automatically get paid at the grade of E-5, or higher if a Soldier has already reached an enlisted grade higher than E-5.

Connecticut Army National Guard members involved in the SMP qualify for several options that help them pay for college, including the tuition waiver, tuition assistance and the G.I. Bill. Because they are participating members of National Guard units they also receive pay for their monthly drills and their annual training periods.

ROTC members receive a stipend for their participation: \$300 for sophomores, \$350 for juniors and \$400 for seniors. Additional scholarship money is also available for cadets. Freshman and sophomores may become members of ROTC. Eligible juniors and seniors may become contracted cadets, which means they must be qualified to be commissioned upon graduation from ROTC.

“When (Connecticut Army National Guard

members) come into ROTC they can have the first two years waived,” Roy said, adding that this option might be especially enticing to a student who is a junior in college. Juniors and seniors are referred to as contracted cadets.

Students in graduate school might also participate in ROTC. Scholarships might also be available for post-graduate studies.

While the financial benefits are calculable on a monetary basis, the leadership training is not so easily measured and the payoff will depend upon how an individual capitalizes on the ROTC experience.

“The biggest benefit is that a student can be commissioned as a young officer,” said Roy, who stresses that ROTC cadets learn leadership through practical course work, such as planning and executing training exercises. “Aside from all that, contracted cadets compete for service schools, such as airborne, mountain warfare and a number of specialty skill courses,” Roy said.

The UConn ROTC program is based at the Storrs campus, but it is not limited to UConn students. In addition, there is a satellite operation based on the campus of Sacred Heart University in Fairfield (known as the Silliman Company). Because the programs are located in different parts of the state, cadets have different options based upon geography. The official website for Army ROTC at UConn www.armyrotc.uconn.edu states that the dual locations allow students from 14 colleges to participate as cadets in Connecticut. It also states that more than 200 students, majoring in just about any academic field, take ROTC in Connecticut every year.

Officer Candidate School is another option for Soldiers who are already members of the Connecticut National Guard. However, OCS has different prerequisites, including minimal educational requirements. Also, OCS Soldiers might already have college degrees and are often older than typical ROTC students, according to Roy.

In their full-time course load, ROTC cadets attend traditional college courses, plus a military science course for the level they have reached. They put the knowledge they’ve learned to use in a weekly three-hour military science lab focusing on small-unit tactics, Roy said.

Between their junior and senior years, cadets attend a 30-day leadership assessment course at Ft. Lewis, Washington. “That’s where they put to use the skills that they’ve learned in the leadership labs, as they are evaluated

against their counterparts nationwide,” Roy said.

While cadets live lives that are pretty typical for college students, there are some activities that the average college student will probably never experience, or simply might not think about performing when not in class.

In a typical week for a cadet, physical fitness training is held from 6-7 a.m. three days a week. “That’s completely run by the cadets and monitored by the cadre. The cadets generate the assignments. They really get into the planning and the execution of the training,” Roy said.

“We are training them to be the planner and to execute the training,” he said. “The cadre is there as a safety net. We normally use the senior cadets to develop the junior cadets. In military terms, the cadre member is the observer/controller/trainer. It’s all about junior leader development and increasing responsibility.”

ROTC cadets participate in one field training exercise per semester and a social event such as “Dining-In” or an awards ceremony. The FTX allows them to put their leadership skills to the test. By planning and attending the social events they learn military protocol, Roy said. Various extra-curricular activities are also available, Roy said.

The UConn campus is also home to an Air Force ROTC unit. The two programs share resources and occasionally will form a joint color guard for a special event, such as UConn basketball game. Army and Air Cadets occasionally conduct fitness training together at the Storrs campus.

Anyone interested in learning more about UConn Army ROTC may contact Capt. Jason Oberton at 860-486-6081, or by e-mail at army1@uconnvm.uconn.edu.

Submit your recruiting leads

Please use the form below to submit recruiting leads to your unit commander

APPLE-MD

APPLE-MD: A friend for the Army National Guard

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

PHONE #: _____

A. AGE: _____

P. Physical Condition: _____ Height: _____ Weight: _____

P. Prior Service? _____

L. Law Violations? Yes: _____ No: _____

If yes, what were the charges? _____

E. Education: Highest Grade Completed: _____

M. Marital Status: _____

D. Dependents: _____

Sports

Air Force NASCAR team revs up for 2005

MASTER SGT. CHARLES RAMEY
AIR WARFARE CENTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Air Force began its fifth year as a NASCAR sponsor when the 2005 Nextel Cup season kicked off with the Daytona 500 on Feb. 20.

After recruiting one of the most accomplished crew chiefs in the sport and making numerous off-season changes, the Air Force-sponsored Wood Brothers Racing No. 21 NASCAR team is focused on success, officials said. The driver of the car No. 21 is Ricky Rudd.

"Right now, we have the best team we've had in years," said Eddie Wood, who co-owns and manages the oldest continuously operating team in NASCAR along with his brother, Len Wood, and sister, Kim Hall.

"We made some engineering changes and a crew chief change with about 12 races to go in the 2004 season. I think without the (points rule change) we probably would have finished eighth or ninth in the points, which is pretty remarkable from where we started."

Leading the charge from the pits is Michael McSwain, who previously served as crew chief for Mr. Rudd with Robert Yates Racing. Together the duo racked up three wins and started races in the pole position four times.

"Obviously we want to be consistent week in and week out, but we also want to do all

we can to give Ricky a shot at a championship," Mr. McSwain said. "Like Air Force pilots and crew chiefs, Ricky and I have a tremendous amount of trust in each other. Because we're chasing the same goals, we have to communicate and rely on each other to accomplish the job. We're able to do so and that's what makes our jobs easier."

"(Mr. McSwain) is a guy who gets results," Mr. Rudd said. "I have a tremendous amount of confidence in him because ... he's a leader who always gives 120 percent and stays on the cutting edge. He's a perfectionist and surrounds himself with people who don't settle for anything less. By having him in our corner, you have strength, and a team that gets results."

Even though he is entrusted with the success of a multimillion-dollar racing team, Mr. McSwain said his job of representing the Air Force one of the highest honors of his career.

"My grandfather is a World War II Army veteran," Mr. McSwain said. "He had a lot of pride in many things, but he probably had more pride in being a veteran than anything he ever did. I've never been in the military, but I appreciate the sacrifices of our men and women in uniform. My team members and I feel if Airmen can put their lives on the line, we need to do our part by going out each week and doing a good job of representing



Ricky Rudd, driver of the No. 21 Motorcraft/Air Force race car, prepares for the start of a race at the speedway here. The 2005 NASCAR season kicks off Feb. 20 with the Daytona 500. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Brian Ferguson)

them on the track."

Mr. Rudd is entering his third season as the team's driver.

"I'm very proud to carry the Air Force colors, and hopefully we can do a better job this year," he said. "The biggest goal is to make the top 10 cut and have a chance to win the championship. To get in the top 10,

we need to be more consistent. We'll concentrate on getting more top 10 and top five finishes and obviously never rule out a win."

The team has been busy preparing for the new NASCAR season by testing their cars in Las Vegas and Fontana, Calif.

Mobile Event Team looking for members

The National Guard Bureau is executing an aggressive new program to promote the ARNG. We are looking for 35 Soldiers for ADSW starting immediately. They will be a part of the ARNG's Mobile Event Team. Travel is a must for these Soldiers as they will be going from city to city deploying a recruiting lead generation system working some of the largest events in the country.

Positions available are 5 01-02s, five E5-6s, 25 E4-1s. All soldiers must have completed BCT and AIT.

To be considered, the applicant must submit a photo in uniform (BDUs preferred) and a BRB, a letter of recommendation from your unit leadership and a letter of endorsement from the State Recruiting and Retention Manager (RRM).

All Soldiers must meet current height and weight standards and present a professional appearance in uniform. Applications are received on a rolling basis to the POC below via email. Selected Soldiers will be notified ASAP and only applicants selected will be notified.

If you are selected a LOI will be forwarded to you on the mission and training time lines. Orders will be cut by the State RRF and funding for the Soldiers ADSW and travel will be provided by NGB in a by name request for the selected soldier.

We require good representation of MOSs,

male and female Soldiers, diversity in race and ethnicity,

Openings are available immediately. The first few weeks of the program all Soldiers will receive intense training on ARNG recruiting and operation of the equipment.

If the unit these Soldiers belong to come up on an alert or mobilization list that will take the priority over this assignment. If a Soldier's unit is already on alert they should not apply for this program.

These Soldiers will be traveling all across the nation for many months without being able to return to their homes and must be free of personal issues that would cause a disruption to the core mission of the team.

Once you are selected we will provide a notification of the events that your team is scheduled to work. We have four mobile event systems that are organized to provide maximum support to the ARNG accessions program.

These teams conduct one-on-one prospecting while working with the local RRF teams and will have a significant impact on ARNG accessions. States that support this request with sharp Soldiers will be considered in the scheduling of the event systems.

Send all requested information to Gregory.Galligan@ngb.army.mil for review and consideration.

11th ANNUAL
NGACT
CONFERENCE

Keynote Speaker, Veterans' Affairs Commissioner Linda Schwartz
March 19, 2005 at Nett Hall, Camp Rell

Name: _____ Rank: _____

Membership Status: ☐ Life ☐ Annual ☐ Honorary ☐ Corporate ☐ New

Unit: _____ ☐ Army or ☐ Air or ☐ Militia ☐ Active or ☐ Retired

Home Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

I will attend the following: (Conference dress is casual business attire)

Business Session ☐ 9a.m. to noon,

Afternoon Program (election) ☐ 1p.m. to 3p.m.

First Come first serve Hotel Discounts - Days Inn call 1-800-268-2195, (Discount ID # 60712) \$68 - king, \$76 - dual queen, or Niantic Inn \$83 (ID Government Leisure rate) 860-739-5451

Conferees must make their own reservations and use the discount ID code.

Fees:

\$20 Conference Registration (includes morning refreshments and light lunch) _____

2005 Dues Renewal* \$6 annual member, \$60 new life member _____

Total Enclosed _____

*You may also join or renew association membership on the day of the conference

Please return this registration along with the appropriate fees to: The National Guard Association of Connecticut, National Guard Armory, 360 Broad Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06105-3795

For more information contact 860-247-5000.

NGACT Awards Dinner will be held that evening. Watch for flyer detailing location, time, cost and guest speaker.

Military Matters



GERRY J. GILMORE
AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE

Servicemembers receiving federal tax exemptions for some or all of their military pay may now elect to apply for certain tax credit options, the chief of the Armed Forces Tax Council said.

Troops deployed to combat zones can now apply for tax refunds based on earned income tax credits, as well as additional child-tax credits, explained Army Lt.

Col. Janet Fenton, the AFTC’s executive director. The AFTC monitors and coordinates tax issues involving active and reserve-component military members.

The earned income credit, Fenton explained, primarily involves lower-income

Troops deployed in combat areas get tax credit options

filers with children. The additional child tax credit, she added, may provide refunds for children under age 17.

Servicemembers who want to apply for the credit refunds are required to fill out and file a federal tax return, Fenton noted.

Enlisted troops serving in combat areas already have all of their military pay excluded from federal taxes, Fenton pointed out, while officers in combat zones can exclude up to \$6,529 of their monthly pay.

Troops deployed to non-combat overseas areas have until June 15 to file their income taxes, Fenton said.

Troops serving in a combat zone, she pointed out, have up to 180 days to file their taxes after departing the area.

For example, “someone who is in Iraq right now,” she noted, “would not have to file their 2004 tax return until they leave Iraq.”

However, some overseas servicemembers would want to file early, Fenton said, because they may be due a refund. Military-operated tax centers at stateside and overseas locales, she noted, can provide service members with tax filing assistance.

And, married service members deployed to combat and non-combat overseas locales can opt to have spouses file tax returns, she noted, provided there’s an applicable power of attorney.

Education Essentials: Chapter 1607 eligibility

Chapter 1607 was established as a part of the Ronald W.Reagan National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005. President Bush signed the Chapter 1607 legislation into law on October 28, 2004 It is a new Education benefit designed to provide educational assistance to members of the Reserve components called or ordered to Active duty on or after September 11, 2001 under title 10 U.S. Code in response to a war or national emergency (contingency operation) as declared by the President or Congress. National Guard members also are eligible if their active duty is under section 502 title 32 U.S.C. and they served for 90 consecutive days when authorized by the President or Secretary of Defense for a national emergency and is supported by federal funds. Department of Defense (DOD) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will determine who is eligible for this program. The Department of Veterans Affairs is working closely with these agencies to insure that full implementation occurs as soon as possible.

If you have never applied for V.A. benefits you need to submit a VA form 22-1990 a copy of your DD214 (discharge from Military Service), copies of your orders and annotate “Chapter 1607” on all correspondence and documents. When documentation is received the VA cannot take action on your claim at this time, but they will store your documents and will notify you when full implementation has been approved.

If you have applied fro VA benefits you do not need to fill out a new application form. However you should submit any available documents such as you DD 214, copies of orders to active duty as evidence of

qualifying service to help establish eligibility for this program. You should also submit a “Request for Change of Program or Place of Training” (VA form 22-1995) which should be annotated “Chapter 1607” on all correspondence and documents.

How many months will you be entitled to Chapter 1607? You will receive 36 months of full time entitlement at your given rate. A Chapter 1706 participants may not use more than 48 months of entitlement under any combination of VA Educational programs. For example, if you’ve already used 20 months under 1606 you will only receive 28 months under 1607. (That’s 36 months at the full time training rate.) Reduced rates will apply for correspondence, flight, apprenticeship/OJT and license certification training.

FTA Money Available

Applies to all Traditional (M-day) Army National Guard soldiers in good standing that have completed Phase I of IADT, and do not ETS during the semester.

Pays 100% of tuition and fee’s, up to \$250 per semester hour, maxes out at \$4,500.00 per fiscal year (fiscal year is from 1 Oct to 30 Sep). Includes Distance Learning also.

Apply on line at www.virtualarmory.com within 30 days, before and after class start.

Soldiers may use other funding sources in addition to ARNG FTA (i.e. Tuition Waiver, Pell Grants and Montgomery GI Bill) to pursue their college work.

MGIB Selective Reserve (MGIB-SR), Chapter 1606, basic benefit, MGIB Kicker incentive and ARNG FTA may be combined when a soldier is enrolled in the MGIB-SR at least ½ time or more. ARNG FTA and MGIB-SR may be combined and exceed 100% of the tuition cost.

Visit the
Connecticut
Guardian
online at
www.ct.ngb.army.mil

GERRY J. GILMORE
AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE

Pentagon leaders and Capitol Hill legislators want to increase the current available combined government death benefit for families of fallen servicemembers by about \$250,000.

If enacted, the proposed change essentially would double the \$262,000 now available to families of servicemembers killed in wartime operations, said Dr. David S.C. Chu, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, Feb. 1 during testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee. The issue has been under study for two years.

Senior defense leaders “believe that sum ought to be nearer to \$500,000,” Dr. Chu told the panel, by increasing the maximum coverage offered by the Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance program and raising the separate death gratuity payment.

The current survivor’s death gratuity payment, which is tax-free, is about \$12,420.

SASC Directory	
SOLDIER-AIRMAN SUPPORT CENTER	
555 Willard Avenue, Building 2W Newington, CT 06111-2693	
Toll Free: 1-888-548-SASC	
E-Mail: FirstName.LastName@CT.NGB.ARMY.MIL	
Fax: (860) 878-6711	
Human Resources	
Personnel Officer	
LTC Michael Vasile	878-6722
Secretary/Receptionist	878-6712
Equal Employment	
State Equal Employment Manager	
SFC Scott Farrell	878-6718
Human Resources Assistant	
SPC Ivette Rosario	878-6721
Technician Management	
Technician Manager	
LTC Jeffrey Sabotka	878-6714
Employee Relations	
Ms Christine Bartlett	878-6738
Ms Kathleen Riccio	878-6735
Staffing	
SSG Brett Wilson	878-6739
SSgt Annette Rivera Torres	878-6734
Classification	
SMgt Kevin Salisbury	878-6730
Labor Relations	
CPT James Guerrero	878-6728
Employee Development	
MSgt Claire Potier	878-6713
Information Management	
SSG Andrew Luthardt	878-6720
TSgt Jackie Jansson	878-6736
AGR Management	
AGR Manager	
CPT James Guerrero	878-6728
Personnel NCO	
SPC Lee Democar	878-6729
Personnel NCO	
SPC Christopher Mackenzie	878-6727
Identification Cards	
SPC Frederick Kyeremeh	878-6725
Senior Army Advisor	
Senior Army Advisor	
LTC Thomas Donnelly	878-6716
Administrative Assistant	
Mr John Marston	878-6717

Pentagon, Senate seek doubling of G.I. survivors' benefit

Survivors of servicemembers killed in war operations also now can receive \$250,000 in maximum SGLI coverage, if they elected to do so.

DOD and Senate proposals would increase the death gratuity payment to \$100,000, and boost maximum SGLI coverage to \$400,000. The Pentagon would pay the premiums for the extra \$150,000 in SGLI coverage when participating servicemembers are deployed in a combat zone.

A plan under discussion, if approved by Congress and the president, would be retroactive to Oct. 7, 2001, the day Operation Enduring Freedom began in Afghanistan.

The U.S. government “already provides a significant set of programs to help the families of those who give their lives in service to the country,” Dr. Chu said. Current compensation programs now available to surviving spouses with children provide about “dollar-for-dollar, what the military member was earning on active service.”



CHIEF MASTER SGT.
WANDA WAWRUCK

Enlisted Update Recognition/Program Updates

Welcome back to our Soldiers from the 118th Medical Battalion who recently returned from a lengthy tour in the "sand box"...it's great to have you back home! To our families and employers who have made a tremendous sacrifice for our Country, State and the National Guard, we appreciate your outstanding support and ask for your continued thoughts and prayers for our remaining Soldiers currently deployed.

During this time of year, we select and recognize our Outstanding Airman, NCO, and Senior NCO of the Year within the State. What's unique about this honor is that the nomination packages of these Airmen will compete at the National Guard Bureau (NGB) level amongst the remaining States and Territories later this month. This is without exception a great honor and proud time for our Connecticut Airmen. Before I share who they are, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the Commanders, Chiefs, First Sergeants and staff support functions that were a part of the process in developing the awards packages. I appreciate your dedication, time and effort in recognizing our outstanding Airmen. Now for the announcement of our 2005 State Outstanding Airmen of the Year...they are: Airman of the Year, Senior Airman Erin McNamara, 103d Communications Flight; NCO of the Year, Staff Sgt. Meisha Nieves, 103d Mission Support Flight; SNCO of the Year, Master Sgt. Kevin Cyr, 103d Logistics Readiness Squadron. Please take the time to extend your congratulations to our 2005 Outstanding Airmen of the Year and wish them luck during the next phase.

As you are aware, I am an active participant in the Enlisted Field Advisory Council (EFAC) at the national level. Most recently, Connecticut hosted a Region 5 EFAC Workshop where we conducted a Town Hall meeting with the 103d Air Control Squadron (ACS). Many of the programs that we discuss at the national level were also addressed during this session. As I have covered in the past, we are sometimes limited in working issues that are legislative in nature. For this reason, we have a close working relationship with professional organizations, such as the Enlisted Association for the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS), Air Force Sergeants Association, (AFSA), Association of the United States Army

(AUSA), and our own National Guard Association of Connecticut (NGACT) to name a few. In addition, we have a National Guard Legislative Liaison Advisor that is a standing member of our council who oversees and coordinates many of these programs with our professional organizations. Without your membership to professional organizations and your many letters written to Congressmen, this task is very difficult to achieve. We appreciate your continued support and dedication in achieving better benefits for our National Guardsmen.

Topping the list of issues we discussed during our workshop is the age 55 retirement and TRICARE benefits. Our EANGUS representatives tell us that there are currently five separate bills to support age 55 retirements. They sense that we are making progress with this issue and encourage your continued support by writing your Congressmen. Secondly, a bill was passed to support TRICARE benefits for National Guardsmen; however, we have not seen any movement through the Department of Defense (DoD) to implement it. EANGUS advises our Guardsmen to continue maintaining your medical bills until DoD publishes the process for reimbursement. If you would like to stay current with these issues or others that EANGUS is currently working, you may log on to their web site at: www.eangus.org.

Lastly, many of our members had difficulty preparing for deployments due to dental issues. Therefore, the Surgeon General's office (NGB) has authorized two options for members to complete the annual screening. Option 1: Member may seek an exam at their personal dentist through civilian insurance, TRICARE Dental Program (TDP), VA center, or dental school. Option 2: Member may choose the Federal Strategic Health Alliance Program (FED_HEAL) and receive one non-pay point. Please note that the government will not reimburse members for any expenses associated with these methods such as corrective treatment. You may consult with the Medical Squadron for details concerning both options.

Again, I appreciate the support received in recognizing our Airmen and those who participated in the Region 5 EFAC Workshop. Best wishes to the 103d Fighter Wing as they prepare and participate in the Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI) next month.

Guard Voices

A St. Valentine's Day message to Connecticut's troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan:

(Editor's Note: This letter was sent overseas to Connecticut troops prior to Valentine's Day)

The work you are doing in the name of advancing democracy and protecting freedom everywhere is nothing short of inspiring. You are setting a wonderful example for the world, and especially for our children, and it would be difficult to overstate our appreciation for everything you do.

I know it is difficult to be away from your loved ones at any time, but especially on holidays – large and small. As you think about your families and those you love on this Valentine's Day, please know that we are thinking of you.

As your mission goes on, it would be easy

to let its value and importance fade from memory. But let me assure you that we will not let that happen. You are constantly in our thoughts and prayers, and we honor and celebrate your courage and the challenging conditions you face every day.

While our gratitude for your service is profound, we know that we owe you and your families more than we can ever repay. We look forward to the day when you come safely home.

Thank you again for your service. We love you, and may God bless you all.

SINCERELY,
M. JODI RELL
GOVERNOR
STATE OF CONNECTICUT

Praise for Connecticut Soldiers

I just wanted to drop you a note on the excellence, professionalism, and efficiency of the Connecticut National Guard members we have had here at the 5th Signal Command G-3 Command Center in Manheim, Germany. Our Command Center provides 24 X 7 situational analysis, operations information and network performance static's to our Command Staff and has greatly benefited by your support.

We have had two of your Soldiers (Capt. Pizzo and Sgt. 1st Class Gilbert) working directly on shift in the Command Center for the last 9 days.

Your other (seven) talented Soldiers have been spread out through the Command working to support our dynamic communications operations and a current

Joint training exercise in Southern Germany.

As an open invitation to your Command, if your AT's brings your Soldiers back to Germany, I will whole heartedly receive of your Junior Officers and Senior Soldiers in my G-3 Command Center for duty.

My sympathies toward your Soldier (Spc. Gruner) and his family as he left here on Emergency Leave to tend to them.

Capt. Pizzo and his Soldiers fly back to Connecticut on Saturday the 22nd of Jan.

Best of fortune and safety to your Soldiers, Sir.

MAJ. JOE PAGNOTTA
UNITED STATES ARMY, SIGNAL CORPS
5TH SIGNAL CMD COMMAND CENTER
OFFICER IN CHARGE

Send Letters to the Editor to:
Editor, Connecticut Guardian, National Guard Armory, 360 Broad Street, Hartford,
CT 06105-3795
or by email to: ctguardian@ct.ngb.army.mil
All letters must be signed and include a phone number for verification.
Letters may be edited for grammar, spelling and space, but not for content.

Visit the
**Connecticut
Guardian**

on-line at
www.ct.ngb.army.mil

Homefront

In defense of Connecticut's children: *Not just Afghanistan*

1ST LT. CHRISTOPHER D. MORGAN
DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION ADMINISTRATOR

Last month it was revealed that North Korea sold processed uranium to Libya in an apparent effort to help Libya in nuclear weapons development.

Days later, North Korea released that it had nuclear weapons. One doesn't have to look very far these days to be reminded of the fact that the United States of America is involved in a world wide war.

In keeping vigil over our brothers and sisters currently serving in harms way, the distinct possibility of future deployments is an unavoidable topic of conversation especially for those of us in uniform.

There can be no doubt as we welcome home our friends from Iraq that their hard work and sacrifice helped make a difference.

There can be no doubt as we view Iraqi's dancing in the street after free elections that America is making a difference.

And there can be no doubt that our enemies are on the wrong side of history.

Rat holes are being uncovered and the networks that service these rats are being cut off. The recent news out of the Korean Peninsula reveals just how high the historical stakes are in this fight while underscoring the fact that our enemies must never prevail.

As Coalition forces succeeded in toppling Sadaam Hussein's regime in Iraq, the world not only witnessed a crushing blow to tyranny but also a collective shiver in the underworld of nuclear proliferation, drug trafficking and terrorism.

It is no coincidence that Libya decided to end its nuclear ambitions shortly after Sadaam was captured. It is no coincidence that Libya led us to nuclear physicist A. Q. Kahn of Pakistan. And it is no coincidence that A. Q. Kahn led us to North Korea.

These great yet un-heralded successes have been tempered by the knowledge that rogue states like North Korea and Iran are still threatening the world with nuclear weapons ambitions if not proliferation, drug trafficking and terrorism.

As the rat-hole network of A. Q. Kahn has been investigated, some interesting avenues of approach have been revealed in how to help roll it up and perhaps destroy it for good and why our fight must continue especially the war on drugs.

Francis Harris reporting for news.telegraph.co.uk wrote in an article titled US plots to cut off N. Korea's funding, that "the United States has agreed to a package of measures aimed at severing North Korea's illicit funding from counterfeiting, drugs trafficking and missile sales in an attempt to

halt the Stalinist regime's nuclear weapons program".

According to Harris, North Korea has helped fund it's nuclear weapons research with funds obtained through drug trafficking. Harris notes that efforts "honed in the war against Al-Qa'eda in shutting down bank accounts and shell companies are now being used against the regime of Kim Jong-il.

The United States is keenly aware that the North Korean regime is in desperate financial straits and "will do anything to get easy sources of cash".

For years the North Koreans have traded anything they can get their hands on. White House spokesman Scott McClellan is quoted as saying "We have been working with our allies and partners for some time now to try and stop North Korea's illegal activities, especially in counterfeiting and narcotics".

It is hard to imagine that drug use could be contributing to nuclear weapons proliferation but the facts sadly appear to prove otherwise.

If you have any questions about Drug Free events or Educational & Leadership Programs please call @860-493-2724 and ask for 1st Lt. Christopher Morgan.

Recently Retired?

Consider coming back to the Connecticut National Guard.

Call your former unit for more information.

Twice-Yearly TSP 'Open Season' sessions stop July 1

GERRY J. GILMORE
AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE

WASHINGTON, Feb. 17, 2005 – Defense Department civilians and servicemembers building tax-free retirement accounts through the Thrift Savings Plan soon will be able to change their investment options at any time instead of just twice a year.

Current biannual TSP "open season" investment-choice windows will end July 1, said Army Lt. Col. Janet Fenton, executive director of the Armed Forces Tax Council. TSP participants, she noted, will be able to switch their retirement account options at any time.

"There's not going to be the two 'open seasons' during the year," Fenton explained, where people can sign up for the retirement savings/investment program, change their contribution levels, or change investment options.

Military people and civilians covered by the Civil Service Retirement System can contribute up to 10 percent of their paycheck to establish tax-free retirement accounts that grow from accumulated savings and investments in bonds, stocks and international funds. Employees covered by the Federal Employees Retirement

System can contribute up to 15 percent in 2005. From 2006 on, no limit will apply to any military, CSRS or FERS participants in TSP.

Another TSP change also slated to start July 1 gives participants the choice of having a financial manager automatically adjust how funds are invested as market conditions change.

"They'll move you from equities to bonds when you need to," Fenton explained, noting such a practice should assist participants in maximizing their TSP contributions.

Servicemembers have been eligible to establish tax-free TSP retirement accounts since January 2002, Fenton said.

Establishing TSP accounts is a good idea even for those military members who don't serve long enough to qualify for a pension, Fenton pointed out. TSP funds accumulated during military service, she added, can be transferred to participating federal agency TSPs if a departing service member takes a government civilian job.

And, TSP savings can also be rolled into non-government civilian employers' IRA retirement accounts, Fenton said.

Employment Opportunity

at Camp Rell, Niantic, CT

Front Desk Billeting (Hotel) Clerk

Part-time (Up to 20 hours) - \$9.00/hour

Friday Evening: 3:30p.m.— 8:30p.m.

Saturday: 7:30a.m.— 8:30p.m.

Sunday: 7:30a.m.— 4:00p.m.

Looking for a responsible person (at least 18 years of age) able to work independently. Would be responsible for scheduling of billeting usage, checking-in/out guests, issuing keys, direct housekeeping priorities and completing minimal documentation.

If Interested, please contact Jenny Collins at (860) 691-4313

Social Security FAQ on a weekend drill

Social Security and taxes, questions answered

COL. GARY G. OTTENBREIT
J6 DIRECTORATE

Although this is an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) issue, I am placing in my column because of the subject. With tax season upon us, it is important to remember that some people who receive Social Security benefits will have to pay income taxes on them.

At the end of each year, Social Security mails each beneficiary a Social Security Benefit Statement (Form SSA-1099) showing the amount of benefits received. This statement can be used when completing the federal income tax return.

50 percent of Social Security benefits may be subject to income tax for individuals with a combined income between \$25,000 and \$34,000, or for couples with a combined income between \$32,000 and \$44,000. (Note: "Combined income" means adjusted gross income, plus nontaxable interest, plus one-half of Social Security benefits.)

Up to 85 percent of Social Security benefits may be subject to income tax for individuals with a combined income above \$34,000, or

for couples with a combined income above \$44,000.

Only about 25 percent of current Social Security beneficiaries have incomes that exceed the thresholds, requiring them to pay taxes on a portion of their Social Security benefits.

For more information on taxation of Social Security benefits, call the IRS's toll-free telephone number, 1-800-829-3676, to ask for Publication 554, Tax Information for Older Americans. The Publication is also available from the IRS Web site, www.irs.ustreas.gov.

Question:

I recently began receiving Social Security disability benefits. Is there a time limit on how long I can receive benefits?

Answer:

If you were found to be disabled under Social Security's definition of disability, you would continue to get disability benefits as long as you continued to be disabled. Social Security periodically checks claims to

determine that a person is still disabled under Social Security's definition.

For more information, check out our website at www.socialsecurity.gov, or call our toll-free number, 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778) and ask for the publication, Disability Benefits.

Question:

I applied for SSI disability benefits about a year ago and was turned down. My disability has gotten worse and I still can't work. Can I apply again?

Answer:

Yes. Even if you were denied before, you may qualify now since your condition has gotten worse.

You can apply online at www.socialsecurity.gov. Or you can call us at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778) to make an appointment.

Question:

Can you tell me about the new Medicare

benefits? I heard some were effective January 2005.

Answer:

Medicare has added benefits to help people stay healthy. As of January 1, 2005, people who receive Medicare can take advantage of three important new benefits: a one-time "Welcome to Medicare" physical exam, cardiovascular screening and diabetes screening.

For more information, you can visit the Medicare website at www.medicare.gov/health/overview.asp



OFFICERS CLUB OF CONNECTICUT
Hartford, CT (860) 249-3634

MARCH 2005

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Sunday April 17 Peter Pan at the Bushnell 1 PM Dinner after show		1 6 PM Quiet Birdmen Dinner	2 830 AM Bkfs CSU - AAUP	3	4	5 NG DRILL
6 NG DRILL	7	8	9	10	11 430 PM Sal's Retirement Party	12 6 PM Surprise Birthday Party
13	14 530 House Committee Mtg	15 12 Noon Ladies O'Club	16	17 St. Patrick's Day MOOA Lunch 530 PM Bd of Gov mtg	18 Club Night St Pat's Day Dinner Dance Irish Food and Irish Music Dan Ringrose Reservations 249-3634	19
20 First Day of Spring; Palm Sunday	21	22	23 5 - 7 PM Prof Insurance Agents Diamond Club Recep	24	25 Good Friday State Holiday	26
27 Easter Sunday	28	29	30 730 - 930 AM Labor Intnl Union local 230 Bkfst 5 PM Ct Nurses Assoc Reception	31 430 - 830 PM Community Development Assoc Reception		

O'CLUB OPEN FOR LUNCH DAILEY 11:30 - 2PM
BAR & LOUNGE OPEN AT LUNCH & 4PM - CLOSE
ST PAT'S DINNER DANCE MAR 18 IRISH FOOD AND MUSIC \$21.95 PER PERSON CALL 249-3634

OFFICERS CLUB OF CONNECTICUT
PRESENTS

FRIDAY, MARCH 18, 2004

St. Patrick's Day Dinner Dance
Hartford, Ct. (860) 249-3634
Cost \$21.95 per person (plus tax & tip)
Irish Ale & Cocktails 6:00PM
Dinner 7:00 PM

MENU
Salad: Lambs Lettuce and Beet Salad w/ Green Goddess Dressing
Entree: Corned Beef Brisket w/ Green Horseradish Sauce
OR Whole Seafood Stuffed Coho Salmon (Baby Salmon)
w/ Green Herb Butter Sauce
Vegetables served family style: Boiled Irish Potatoes, Cabbage,
Baby Carrots & Parsnips
Irish Soda Bread & Rye Bread
Dessert : Leprechaun Delight
IRISH SINGING AND DANCING TO IRISH TENOR,
DAN RINGROSE ON HIS GUITAR
Reservations Please O'Club (860) 249 -3634

Guarding Your Rights

Legal Affairs: *Can you sue the United States government?*

CAPT. TIMOTHY TOMCHO
JAG OFFICE

Soldiers often express their desire to sue the federal government for some wrong that occurred to them while they were in a military status.

Regardless of the desire to sue, most soldiers are aware that there is something "out there," some amorphous legal hurdle protecting the federal government from "soldier suits."

The rule stopping soldiers (and their family members) from suing the federal government is called the "Feres Doctrine," which arose from a Supreme Court Opinion.

Lieutenant Rudolph Feres died in a barracks fire at Camp Pine, New York, in December 1947.

His widow sued the government to recover for his death, which she claimed was caused by the government's negligence.

She argued that the military should have known that the barracks were unsafe because of a defective heating plant and that the military failed to maintain an adequate fire watch. The lower courts dismissed the case. She appealed to the Supreme Court.

In *Feres v. United States*, the Supreme Court (340 U.S. 135 (1950)) heard three consolidated claims of military negligence: *Feres*, *Jefferson* and *Griggs*.

In *Jefferson*, the claim of negligence arose from a military surgeon leaving an 18" by 30" towel in a Soldier's abdomen after an operation. The towel was discovered 18 months after the surgery. The *Griggs* case involved another claim of military medical negligence, which resulted in the death of a service member.

The common thread consolidating these three cases before the Supreme Court was whether the Federal Tort Claims Act (FTCA) applied to the military members.

The FTCA, enacted on August 2, 1946, provided for Government liability "for money damages occurring on and after Jan. 1, 1945, for injury or loss of property, or personal injury or death caused by the negligent or wrongful act or omission of an employee of the government while acting within the scope of his office or employment, under circumstances where the United States, if a private person, would be liable to the claimant in accordance with the law of the place where the act or omission occurred."

Congress enacted FTCA as a limited waiver to the doctrine of sovereign immunity: the "king can do no wrong." Sovereign immunity effectively makes the "crown" or "sovereign" immune from suit.

In response to this system, by allowing claims against the government, Congress provided a mechanism for recovery for

damages arising from the government's negligence and eliminated thousands of requests to Congress for legislative relief from governmental negligence.

Regardless of the broad waiver of immunity in the language of the FTCA, the Court ruled in *Feres* that military members, and suits derivative of them, were not included in the FTCA waiver of sovereign immunity.

The Court stressed the distinctly federal nature of the relationship between the Government and members of its armed forces

A majority of the Supreme Court felt that these causes of action were classically exempt from the FTCA, under which "it was not contemplated that the Government should be subject to liability arising from acts of a governmental nature or function."

The Court concluded the case by ruling that the FTCA did not create a cause of action for service members who suffer injury from Government or military negligence, and that the relationship of military personnel to the Government "has been governed exclusively by federal law."

In 1987, in *U.S. v. Stanley*, the court upheld the *Feres* doctrine. Justice Lewis F. Powell concluded in the court's ruling: "Suits brought against the government for service-related injuries could undermine the commitment essential to effective service and thus have the potential to disrupt military

discipline in the broadest sense of the word."

The *Stanley* ruling firmly underscores the *Feres* doctrine barring soldier suits. Service members are not wholly without redress. Military personnel and Department of the Army civilians, under the Personnel Claims Act, 31 USC § 3721, as implemented by Army Regulation 27-20, Chapter 11, may file administrative claims for losses incident to service.

This includes household goods damages during shipment; privately-owned vehicle (POV) shipment damage; on-post POV theft, vandalism and other unusual occurrences; and on-post quarters damage and theft.

This is a gratuitous payment statute, not intended as total insurance coverage. All claims under this chapter must be presented to an Army claims office within two years of the incident.

This article is not intended as and does not constitute legal advice. Specific legal issues are unique to each person and factual situation. Persons with legal issues are encouraged to personally consult an attorney.



RONALD E. LEE, 1ST SGT. (RET.) USAR
CT-ESGR PUBLIC AFFAIRS CHAIRMAN

Over the past few weeks, with units returning from their tours of duty in Iraq and other overseas deployments, we have received several inquiries regarding what civilian employers can and cannot require their employees who serve in the uniformed services to do.

These inquiries have ranged from whether an employer can require an employee to use their accrued vacation and/or sick time while on active duty to whether the employer must continue medical insurance coverage and a whole range of other issues.

Most of these topics are covered during your unit's USERRA briefing, but it is understandable that some information may not have been understood or received. The following will address your USERRA rights concerning your absence from your civilian job for uniformed service.

A person who leaves a civilian job for voluntary or involuntary service in the uniformed services is entitled to re-employment in the civilian job, with accrued seniority and possibly other benefits, if he

USERRA rights: Voluntary vs. involuntary service

or she meets the following eligibility criteria:

- Must have left the job for the purpose of performing service in the uniformed services [38 U.S.C. 4312(a)].
- Must have given prior oral or written notice to the civilian employer [38 U.S.C. 4312(a)(1)]. Prior notice is not required if it is precluded by military necessity or otherwise impossible or unreasonable [38 U.S.C. 4312(b)].
- Cumulative period or periods of service in the uniformed services relating to that particular civilian employment relationship must not have exceeded the five-year limit. All involuntary service and some voluntary service are exempted from the five-year limit [38 U.S.C. 4312(c)].
- Must have been released from the period of uniformed service without having been "dropped from the rolls" or having received a punitive or other-than-honorable discharge [38 U.S.C. 4312(e)(1)].
- Must have reported back to work in a

timely manner or have submitted a time application for reemployment [38 U.S.C. 4312(e)(1)].

If you or your immediate family members have any questions or concerns relating to your civilian employment based upon your uniformed service please contact the Connecticut Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (CT-ESGR) at (860) 721-5903, by e-mail at ctesgrlew@cox.net or at our office at 196 West Street, Rocky Hill, CT 06067.

CT-ESGR has trained ombudsmen to assist you in answering questions or in resolving problems with your civilian employer however, we cannot do anything unless you take the first step in contacting us and letting us know that a problem exists.



Contact a Recruiter by email at
recruiter@ctbrad.ang.af.mil
or call toll free 1-800-992-4793

Have you recruited anyone today?

**Recruiting is everyone's
responsibility.
Contact your unit today to find
out what positions are
available and help find
someone to fill them.**

**You are the
best
advertisement
for the
Connecticut
National
Guard.**

Inside OCS

The Warrior and the Diplomat

OC CLAUDE
HIBBERT OCS CLASS 50

The Iraqi electoral process was a major milestone in Operation Iraqi Freedom. It is now a source of encouragement for the international community and the U.S. military.

Pictures of Iraqi voters raising their ink stained fingers was interpreted as a public act of defiance against the insurgents. Behind the scenes, U.S. troops maintained operational security, put the enemy on the defensive and protected the vast majority of polling stations.

This milestone was reached as a result of a partnership between the Iraqi people and warriors sent to liberate them.

Safeguarding polls just another example of how the responsibilities of U.S. Army Officers have grown to include diplomatic and humanitarian missions.

It is the opportunity to be a warrior and a humanitarian that inspired me to re-join the military.

Platoon Leaders and Company Commanders in Iraq and Afghanistan have

been challenged with managing a diverse range of projects like the construction of a school, bridge or hospital while maintaining their security in their sectors.

To the local communities, they are the direct representatives of the U.S. government. This compels Soldiers to develop diplomatic, negotiating and leadership skills needed to work with community leaders.

The new emphasis on the warrior ethos and the humanitarian mission appealed to the part of me that always wanted to work in a Special Forces unit.

In fact OCS Class 50 demonstrates our commitment to public service in our civilian occupations, which are in fields such as higher education, public administration and the social services. I currently work for the Connecticut National Guard Family Program providing marketing and communications support for family related events.

The most rewarding work is channeling the efforts of independent non-profit organizations to provide aid to dependent families, soldiers and children of Iraq.

I have always maintained a deep interest

in humanitarian missions that help to keep the peace and promote democracies across the globe.

I remember watching the crackdown on protestors in Tiananmen Square by the communist Chinese government.

In subsequent years, I was deeply influenced by news reports of genocide, famine and the displacement of entire cultures in places such as Rwanda, Ethiopia and Bosnia. I wanted to play an instrumental role in helping developing nations as the leader of non-governmental organization or Foreign Service officer.

At the same time I knew that the great statesmen of the twentieth century cut their professional teeth in public service with military service.

For example, President Jimmy Carter was an entrepreneur, captain of a nuclear submarine, builder of low income housing, inoculated children in sub Saharan Africa and helped watch elections in developing democracies. Carter's track record of public service served as a model for me.

Becoming an Army Officer is a good step for anyone interested in International Affairs or Government. While pursuing a Masters in Business Administration I found Army Troop Leading procedures a helpful model for organizational leadership.

Officer Candidate School is like a mini-MBA with a focus on military operations. Dealing with the local village chiefs was a role once reserved primarily for Civil Affairs and Special Forces units.

However, due to the shortage of those specialized units all commissioned officers deployed to Iraq need to be prepared to accept this challenge.

The Global War on Terror requires a commitment to the warrior ethos and the ability to work with community leaders to find and destroy terrorist cells.

Learning languages and customs of different cultures is critical to performing the effective house-to-house searches and community policing. General Carl Steiner, the second commander of U.S. Special Operations Command laid down the law about standards of conduct for his covert units in the field.

He demanded, "Respect the human dignity of each and every person; respect for property; no abuse... We are here to help them, and they will help us if we do. We cannot survive without their protection and support."

If you are interested in applying for a spot in OCS Class 51 and you have questions or would like further information please do not hesitate to contact OC John Rossi at John.F.Rossi@us.army.mil or (860) 559-3963

Leadership Regiment announces upcoming schools, courses

Basic Training Orientation/ Recruit Holding Company

Mar. 19-20

OCS Phase 2

Mar. 19-20

Basic NCO Course Phase 1

Mar. 19-20

Combat Lifesavers Course Recertification

March 19-20

Combat Lifesavers Course #2

April 23-24 & May 21-22

The Army Instructors Training Course

April 23-24, May 21-22 & June 4

TAC Qualification Course #2

May 16-20

Pre-PLDC

March 12-13

Fitness Leader Course

April 16

QRF

March 18-20

Health & Wellness

May 21-22 through Sep. 24-25

Do you have what it takes
to take your career to the next level?



1st Battalion (OCS), 169th Regiment
(LDR)

Officer Candidate School Information Briefs:

DATES

22 JAN 05
26 FEB 05
19 MAR 05
16 APR 05
21 MAY 05
25 JUN 05

Bring a Friend, Spouse or Significant Other.
Information Brief will be in Building 402, Leadership Hall,
beginning at 1000 hours.

For more information contact

1LT Shaun O'Dea
(860) 691-4216

shaun.odea@ct.neb.army.mil



ADSW Opportunity

Looking for a college student/individual, E5 or below (Supply Qualified Preferred) to do part time ADSW for the 169th LDR REGT in the Supply building with Sgt. 1st Class Stanton at Camp Rell. Part time ADSW consists of days off from school and maybe some weekends and WILL NOT conflict with assigned unit's drills. POC is Sgt. 1st Class Stanton at (860) 691-4318.

Health & Fitness



Medical Notes



Understanding Gout

COL. FRANK T. DINUCCI
RN, COHN-S

Recently a friend stated he has been waking up in the middle of night with extreme pain to his left big toe. He sought help from his physician and was diagnosed with gout. So I decided this would be a good article for this month's medical notes.

According to the Arthritis Foundation, gout effects 2.1 million people. It can occur at any age but mostly effects men between the ages of 40 to 50 years of age. Gout is a disease of the joints; it causes sudden, severe episodes of pain, tenderness,

redness, warmth and swelling of joints. Gout usually effects one joint and usually doesn't spread. The common site is usually the big toe, but it can be found in other joints. There is no cure for gout, but the symptoms can be treated successfully.

Your physician diagnoses gout by performing a physical exam of the effected area and by doing a blood test to determine the amount of uric acid in the blood. In some cases the physician will draw fluid from the site to determine the level of uric acid crystals.

According to the Arthritis Foundation gout usually occurs in three phases:

1. Sudden joint pain and swelling that usually goes away after 5 to 10 days.
2. A period of no symptoms at all, followed by other acute episodes.
3. After a number of years, if left untreated, persistent swelling, stiffness and mild to moderate pain in one or more joints can occur after numerous acute episodes

The main culprit that causes gout is uric acid crystals, that can get deposited in the joint, this cause the pain and swelling. Uric acid crystals are derived from uric acid, when an excess of uric acid is in the blood uric acid crystals can form.

There are medicines and diets that are effective in treatment for gout. To find out the proper diet and medications, I highly recommend you go on the Arthritis Foundation web site at <http://www.arthritis.org>. Most of the information was provided by the Arthritis Foundation

If you have any health issues you like to see medical notes cover or if you have any health issue questions, please send them to francis.dinucci@ct.ngb.army.mil, or mail them to Col. Frank DiNucci, AASF#1, B.I.A.P., Building #152, Windsor lock, CT 06096.

Fit for Life: The TRICARE Dental Program

The TRICARE Dental Program (TDP) was implemented on Feb. 1, 2001. The TDP is a voluntary dental insurance program that is available to eligible Active Duty family members, Select Reserve and Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) members, and their eligible family members. Retirees and their eligible family members can enroll in the TRICARE Retiree Dental Program (TRDP) which is a premium based program (see TRICARE Retiree Dental Program fact sheet or visit www.trdp.org).

TDP Dental Coverage:

a.. The TDP provides 100 percent coverage for diagnostic, emergency, and preventive services, with the exception of sealants. Sealants are covered at the 80 percent level with a 20 percent cost share paid by the beneficiary.

b.. The TDP also covers the following services with a member cost share: fillings, root canals, crowns, extractions, orthodontics, periodontics, among other services.

c.. The benefit package includes general anesthesia coverage at a cost share when provided in connection with a covered benefit. Dentists or other professional providers must be licensed and approved to provide anesthesia in the state where the service is rendered.

d.. Maximum annual benefit coverage is \$1,200 for all routine dental care. The maximum lifetime orthodontic benefit coverage is \$1,500.

e.. Enlisted members in pay grades E-1 to E-4 have reduced cost shares for certain procedures.

f.. Complete benefits and cost share percentages are available at www.ucci.com.

Eligibility:

Family members of all active duty uniformed services members, Select Reserve (SELRES) and Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) members and/or their families may enroll in the TDP. Sponsors must have at least 12 months remaining of their service commitments at the time they or their families enroll. The 12-month enrollment commitment

is waived for families of Reservists called to active duty for certain contingency operations if they apply for TDP within 30 days of entry on active duty.

Eligibility is determined based on the service member's military personnel information residing in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). The uniformed services personnel office reports the information to DEERS.

Active duty personnel are not eligible for the TDP. They receive dental care from military dental treatment facilities. Reservists who are ordered to active duty for a period of more than 30 consecutive days have the same dental coverage as active duty service members.

Additional information pertaining to reservists and their families can be found in the Medical and Dental Care for Reserve Component Members and their Families fact sheet.

Former spouses, parents, parents-in-law, disabled veterans, foreign military personnel and Uniformed Services retirees and their families are not eligible for the TDP.

Enrollment:

Enrollment in the TDP is handled by United Concordia Companies Inc. (UCCI), the TDP contract administrator. Enrollment/Change applications are available by calling UCCI at 1-888-622-2256. Online enrollment is available at www.ucci.com.

The enrollment application must be received by UCCI not later than the 20th day of the month for coverage to begin on the first day of the next month. If UCCI receives the application after the 20th day of the month, coverage may not begin until the first day of the second month. Incorrect eligibility information in DEERS will cause applications to be denied. Enrollment options are available at www.ucci.com.

Once enrolled, members must stay in the TDP for at least 12 months (with certain exceptions, such as loss of DEERS eligibility because of divorce, marriage of a child, etc.). After 12 months, enrollment continues on a month-to-month basis. The sponsor must

contact UCCI to disenroll from the TDP.

The first month's premium is due upon enrollment. The premium amount is shown on the enrollment form. After the first month, monthly premiums may be paid by payroll allotment or, in some cases, may be billed directly to the member by UCCI.

Costs to the Beneficiary:

Beneficiary Category

Costs

Feb 1, 2005-Jan 31, 2006

Active duty family members and family members of Select Reserve and Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) (special mobilization category) sponsors on active duty orders for more than 30 days

a.. Single enrollment, \$9.32

b.. Family enrollment, \$23.31

Select Reserve or Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) (special mobilization category) sponsor

a.. Single enrollment, \$9.32

Family members of Selected Reserve or IRR (special mobilization category) sponsors not on orders for more than 30 days

IRR (other than special mobilization category) sponsors and their family members

a.. Single enrollment, \$23.31

b.. Family enrollment, \$58.27

TDP Survivor Benefit:

When a military sponsor dies while on active duty or active Guard and Reserve orders for a period of more than 30 days, surviving family members enrolled in the TDP will continue to receive TDP benefits for three years from the month following the sponsor's death. This TDP survivor benefit also applies to enrolled family members of Select Reserve and Individual Ready Reserve (early mobilization only) sponsors who die while in Selected Reserve and Individual Ready Reserve (early mobilization only) status, regardless of whether the sponsor was on active duty orders or enrolled in the TDP at the time of his/her death.

Under this survivor program, the

government will pay 100 percent of the premium for three years from the month following the sponsor's death.

The requirement to be enrolled in the TDP at the time of the sponsor's death is waived in certain limited circumstances where the surviving family was previously enrolled in the TDP, but disenrolled due to transfer to a duty station where dental care was provided to the member's eligible family members under a program other than the TDP.

At the time of death, the sponsor (and the enrolled family members) will be disenrolled and the TDP contractor will notify the survivors of this disenrollment and the terms of the TDP survivor benefit. The contractor will re-enroll the previously enrolled family members under the terms of the TDP survivor benefit and will bill the government for 100 percent of the TDP premium. Contractual lock-in and lock-out provisions are not applicable to the TDP survivor benefit. The contractor tracks the three year TDP survivor benefit period and disenrolls the family members accordingly. Prior to disenrollment, the contractor will notify the family members of coverage termination. Once the three year TDP survivor benefit ends, family members may be eligible for the TRDP, administered by Delta Dental.

For more information about the TDP, beneficiaries may access the benefit handbook online at www.ucci.com or by calling toll-free 1-800-866-8499, 24 hours a day. Members residing outside the continental U.S. (OCONUS) should call 1-888-418-0466 (toll-free). This number is available in the following countries: Australia, Bahrain, Belgium, Bolivia, Colombia, Egypt, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Panama, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom. At all other locations, members should call 1-717-975-5017. Representatives are available to assist members in English, German and Italian 24 hours a day, Monday through Friday.

The Green Guard

Winter Wildlife

MELISSA TONI
NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGER

What does the Environmental Division do during the winter months? While most outdoor work ceases during the cold weather months, some projects can be initiated only when the snow falls.

The Environmental Division is conducting two interesting wildlife research projects, including population surveys of Eastern cottontail, New England cottontail, and white-tailed deer.

The survey for Eastern and New England cottontails is sparked by a request for the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to consider listing the New England cottontail on the federal threatened and endangered species list.

The New England cottontail is native to southern New England and has been out-competed by the Eastern cottontail.

The Eastern was introduced into this area around the early 1900s. The two species eat the same foods and live in the same basic habitats.

Over time, it is believed that the New England cottontails have not been as successful as the Easterns at reproducing and sustaining a healthy population.

The request for listing came from a wildlife protection group, and the USFWS is required to research such requests. Listing of the New England cottontail would afford the species protection under the federal Endangered Species Act.

This listing would require population surveys for any activity within the species' habitat area. As of this month, the USFWS tells the Environmental Division that the decision is at least one year in the future.

Two methods exist to determine the difference between an Eastern and New England cottontail.

One method involves skull analysis of dead rabbits. The other involves DNA sampling of rabbit scat. Over the next two months, the scat analysis will be conducted at Stone's Ranch Military Reservation.

There are three goals of this study: 1) to determine the actual population of New England cottontails on Stone's Ranch, 2) to determine the species prime habitat, and 3) to determine the ratio of New Englanders versus Easterns.

If it turns out that there are more New England cottontails than expected, the data will be submitted to USFWS to support the case that the species should not be listed

by the Endangered Species Act.

If the USFWS does list the species, the Environmental Division will be ahead of the game.

If a landowner, such as the Military Department, takes a pro-active approach to managing species there will be less constraints imposed on the activities that occur on that land if the species gets listed.

The other wildlife survey to be initiated during the winter months is a white-tailed deer population and health study. Deer can be surveyed at night using vehicles and spotlights. This kind of survey is actually quite enjoyable and the results are very beneficial to a hunting program.

The goals of this survey include: 1) to determine overall health of the deer, 2) to determine populations of each age class, and 3) to determine the overall range of the deer. Gathering this information will help the Environmental Division plan management activities to increase deer population and size, such as opening and clearing land, planting food plots, and increasing forage areas.

The Environmental Division hopes that these surveys will balance wildlife management and troop readiness on our lands.



Visit the
**Connecticut
Guardian**
on-line at

www.ct.ngb.army.mil

Why Diversity?

Women's History Month Celebration planned for March 24

The United States has been blessed by noteworthy women who have played defining roles in shaping our Nation. These contributions have enriched our culture and strengthened our nation. This is a period of time where achievements of great women and the struggles of the average woman are highlighted and celebrated. It's a time to take stock of the world around you and to notice how much has changed in this nation. It is a time to recognize the people who made these changes possible. The history of American women is an expansive story of outstanding individuals who sacrificed much and worked hard in pursuit of a better world. This inspiring nature of determination that shaped these pursuits continues to serve as an example to those who seek to better our nation. Women's History Month provides our country the privilege of honoring the countless contributions American women have made throughout our history.

On March 24th, 2005 The Connecticut National Guard in conjunction with the United States Postal Service will host its 2005 Women's History Month Celebration at the Radisson hotel, 100 Berlin Road, Cromwell, Connecticut. The event will take place from

9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Following the celebration workshops on Woman's issues will be presented from 10:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. The 2005, Women's History Month theme, "Women Change America," honors and recognizes the role of American women in transforming culture, history and politics as leaders, writers, scientists, educators, politicians, artists, historians, and informed citizens. "Women Change America" also celebrates the myriad ways in which the spirit, courage, and contributions of American women have added to the vitality, richness, and diversity of American life. The United States Postal Service will be unveiling a special stamp dedication as part of its distinguished American stamp series. Our "2005 Women's History Month Celebration" is open to the general public. We encourage *all* members of the Connecticut National Guard and civilian community to join us as we celebrate "Women Change America." We are confident this event will be a most enjoyable and educational experience. Light refreshments will be served at the conclusion. To confirm your attendance, please contact SPC Ivette Rosario at (860) 878-6721.

In conjunction with this year's theme we will have speakers presenting on issues concerning education, politics and business. Among these speakers is Betty J. Steinberg who will be speaking on how woman have changed Education. Steinberg has served as Commissioner of Education since November of 2003. She is a 24 year veteran of the Connecticut Department of Education where she served as Associate Commissioner of Teaching and Learning from 1992 to 2003. She has been a driving force in developing and implementing programs to strengthen teaching, raise expectations for students' achievement, and enhance curriculum.

Speaking on how woman have changed Business is Barbara Espinosa Occhino, President and Creative Director of Vertex Marketing. As an expert in Advertising and Marketing, she has served as a judge for the Annual Clarion Advertising Awards and the New England News Association Advertising Awards. Barbara co-authored a national "Master Marketing Tips" column. She has been a consultant/guest speaker and seminar leader for corporations, government agencies, businesses and organizations including SNET, Siemens, Pelton and Crane, General Motors/United Auto Workers, Union County College,

and Rutgers University among others. She has also conducted presentations and workshops for the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Hartford Economic Development Council, SINE Entrepreneur's Network, Innovators Network, CT Inventors Association, Exchange Club Stamford Sector, Yankee Invention Exposition, the Connecticut Minority Supplier Diversity Council and the Stamford Public Schools. In addition, Barbara graduated with honors from Rutgers with a Bachelor in Communications and Minor in Biological Sciences.

From our nation's beginning to the present, women have answered the call to duty without Hesitation. Like their male counterparts, they put their lives, their goals, and their dreams on hold to serve their nation, women now hold positions of leadership within the Armed Forces. This year we would like to take the opportunity in saluting the women who have proudly and honorably served in our Nation while serving as a member of the Connecticut National Guard. We look forward to seeing you there.

Retirees' Voice

Updating Tricare and DEERS important for benefits

SGT. 1ST CLASS (RET.) JOHN BEDNARZ

I received an e-mail the other day from Staff Sgt. Ron; USAF (RET) explaining that he was a retiree over age 65 and has been drawing retired pay since May of 1999. He went to get a prescription at the drug store and was told he was not registered and would have to pay full price. After calling TRICARE and DEERS, he was told that in their computers he was under age 60 and a 'Gray Area' retiree. He went to the nearest ID card facility and they took care of his problem in time. He was told that there are many people in the same boat and the DEERS people run into it often. So, from SSG Ron I pass on this warning. Everyone should check his or her DEERS status periodically to avoid that day when they wish to avail themselves of a service or benefit and they are asked, "Who are you?"

I have been hearing of, and reading articles by many people in high places that they are 'worried' that all of the 'benefits' that are being awarded to retirees is placing a heavy burden on our Defense Department budget giving the impression that we retirees are causing DOD to operate in the red, when in fact the monies come from a different pocket. They are painting a picture that we are taking advantage of Congress during

these stressful times, when we are only trying to get what retirees rightfully deserve. It seems they are setting the stage for a movement to curtail all of the advancements that have been made in righting some wrongs that have been done to retirees and their widows. We need to stay alert for any movement to undo all that has been gained and to press for those items that were not complete like Rep. Mike Bilirakis (R-FL) reintroducing his bill HR 303 proposing Full Concurrent Receipt for all disabled retirees.

Another bill that has been introduced and needs our attention is S. 185 whose author is Sen. Ben Nelson (D-FL) which is a bill to fix the offset problem with Dependents Indemnity Compensation (DIC) and would move the SBP premium "paid-up" date from 2008 to October 2005. There are more bills coming and I hope to keep you aware of them as they are introduced.

I am told of an interesting *USA Today* article about retirees signing up for a program to return to active duty for a year or more. They range from the mid-40s to the late 60s or more and each has at least 20 years or more of service. From a list of 4,500 applicants the Army compiled a list of 3,000 retired soldiers and asked them if they would be willing to be recruiters or civil affairs officers.

The Army has found 616 retirees willing to fill 442 jobs as civil affairs officers in and around Iraq. At least 10 have agreed to become recruiters.

The 4,500 retirees that applied fall into three categories. 1,000 retirees are healthy and have been out of the service less than 5 years. 2,000 are in good health and out no more than 10 years and are 60 years old or younger. The third category of 1,500 retirees are older than 60 or have disabilities. I fall into category four which we won't talk about.

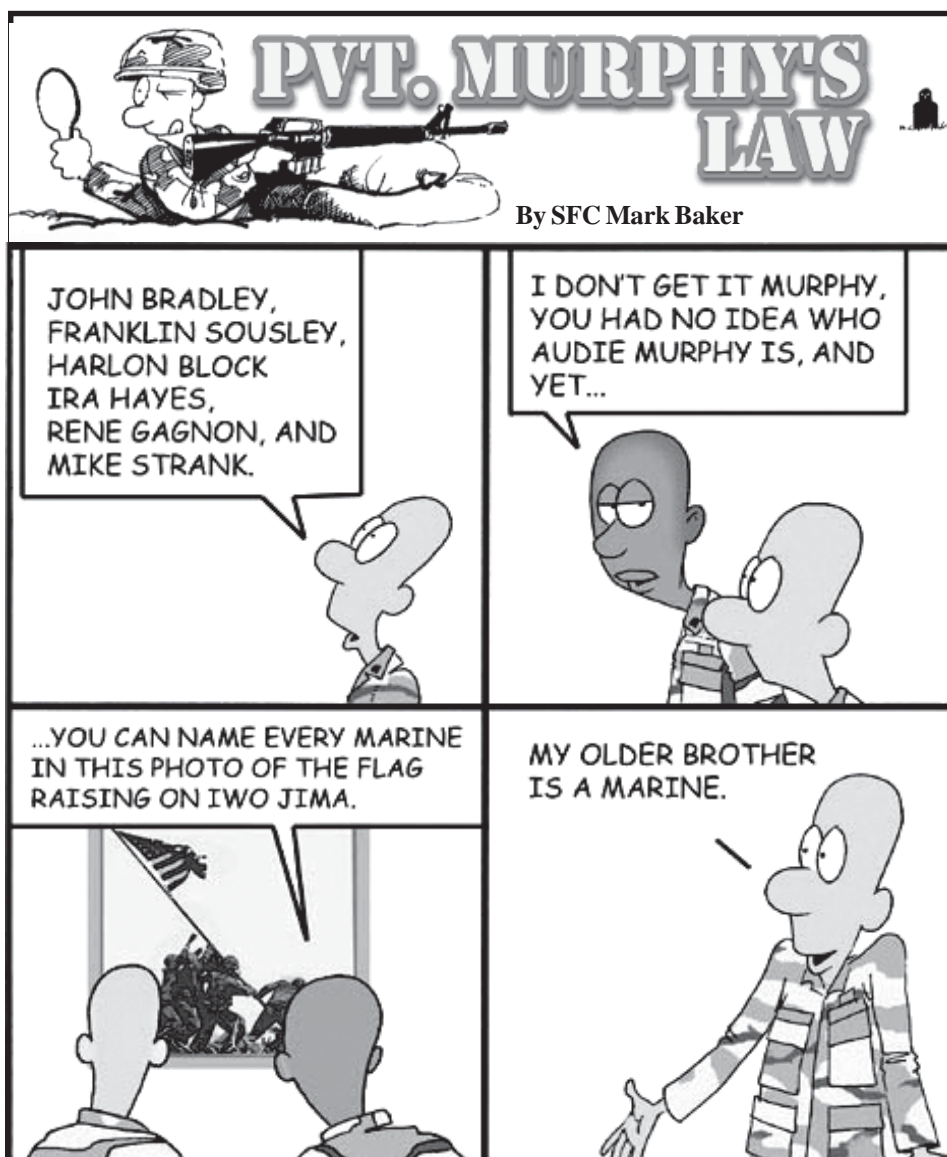
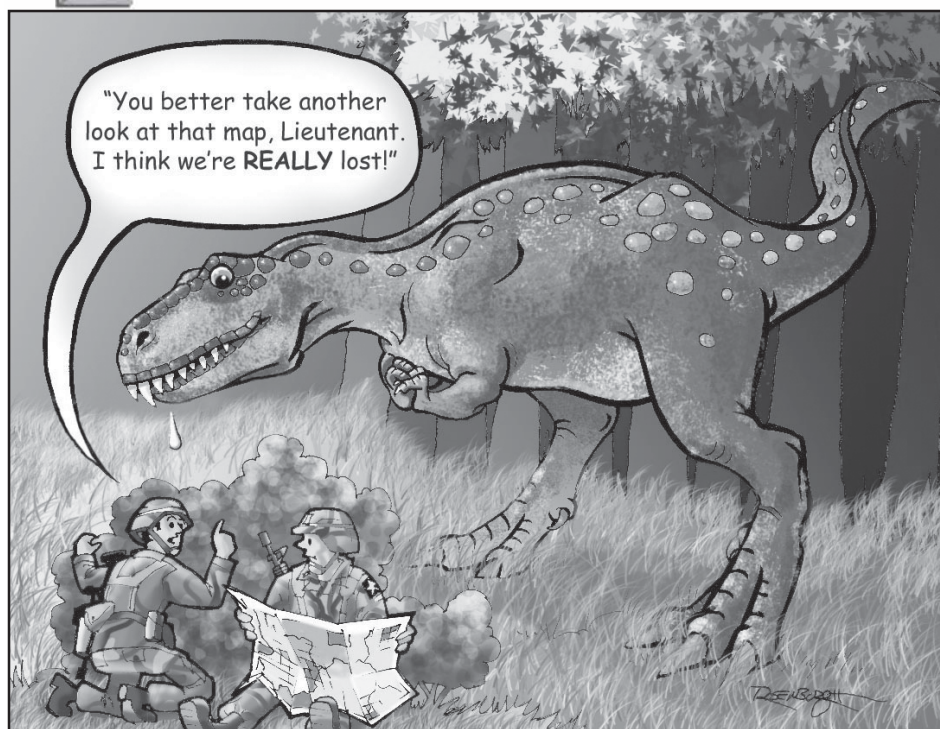
**For
deployment-
related
questions call
1-800-858-2677**

CNGRoF to hold reunion

The Connecticut National Guard Retirees of Florida will hold its annual reunion in Orlando Florida on Friday and Saturday, March 4 - 5, 2005. This will be the association's 20th reunion. All former and retired Connecticut National Guardsmen (Army or Air) are welcomed to attend. For more information please contact CWO (Ret) Arthur Finnegan, telephone (727) 725-7206; or CSM (Ret) Aksel Hansen, telephone (352) 686-1628.

2nd Louie

By Bob Rosenburgh



Connecticut National Guard Fulltime Employment Opportunities

The following are Connecticut Army and Air National Guard Technician openings. For a copy of the full Technician vacancy announcements, go to www.ct.ngb.army.mil and click on employment opportunities.

Army National Guard Technician Vacancies			
Position Title	Unit	Pay Grade	Closing Date
Heavy Mobile Equip Repair Sprvrs	FMS 10	WG-09	Mar. 16, 2005
Aircraft Mechanic	AASF	WG-10	Mar. 16, 2005
Aircraft Mechanic	AVCRAD	WG-10	Mar. 18, 2005
Computer Assistant	AASF	GS-09	Mar. 28, 2005
Information Technology Specialist	USPFO	GS-09	Mar. 28, 2005
Supply Technician	AVCRAD	GS-06	March 28, 2005

Air National Guard Technician Vacancies			
Position Title	Unit	Pay Grade	Closing Date
Fire Chief	103 FW	GS-09	Mar. 7, 2005
Secretary	103 ACS	GS-05	Mar. 9, 2005
Support Services Assistant	103 ACS	GS-05	Mar. 9, 2005
Aircraft Mechanic	103 FW	WG-10	Mar. 10, 2005
Contract Specialist/Purchasing Agent	103 FW	GS-07/09	Mar. 11, 2005
Supervisory Production Control	103 FW	GS-11	Mar. 11, 2005
Computer Specialist	103 FW	GS-09	Mar. 16, 2005

Listed below are current openings in the Connecticut National Guard AGR program. For a copy of the Military Tour Vacancy Announcement, go the www.ct.ngb.army.mil and click on employment opportunities.

Army National Guard AGR Vacancies			
Position Title	Unit	Rank	Area of Consideration
Production Recruiter	RRC	SFC/E-7	Open AGR Nationwide
Operations and Training Officer	RRC	O1-O3	Open AGR Nationwide
Senior Services Sergeant	AVCRAD	E-5/E-7	Open AGR Nationwide
Readiness NCO			

Air National Guard AGR Vacancies			
Position Title	Unit	Rank	Area of Consideration
Fire Chief	103 FW	E-7/E-8	Open AGR
Security Forces Craftsman	103 MSG	up to SSGT	Open AGR Nationwide
Contracting Specialist/Purchasing	103FW	E-4 to E-7	On Board AGR Only
Spvr Production Controller	103 FW	E-8/E-9/O2-4	On Board AGR Only

NOTE: Other positions with outdated closing dates are also listed on the website. Some of these positions are currently under consideration, and others may have their application dates extended. Keep checking the website and if you have any questions concerning outdated postings, call HRO at (860) 878-6739 or (860) 878-6729.

Temporary Technician Employment Opportunities

The Human Resource Office has Temporary Technician employment opportunities available throughout the State. We have a need for a variety of military specialties including Family Support Specialists, Administrative Support Personnel, Aircraft Mechanics, Finance Specialists, Heavy Equipment Mechanics and Operators, etc.

If you are a member of the Connecticut National Guard and are interested in one of these employment opportunities, please call the HRO Staffing Specialist at (860) 878-6739 or just submit an OF-612 and OF-306 directly to the HRO.

If sending your application directly please ensure you sign and date both forms, document all your civilian and military experience, list your daytime phone number and identify the type of Temporary Technician position you would be interested in filling.

Coming Events March

- March 6-9
- EANGUS Legislative Workshop
- March 11
- 2nd Company Governor's Foot Guard Dance
- Benefit National Guard Foundation of Connecticut
- March 17
- St. Patrick's Day
- March 18
- EANGUS Area 1 Caucus
- March 19
- NGACT Annual Conference
- Camp Rell
- March 20
- Palm Sunday
- March 24
- Women's History
- March 25
- Good Friday
- March 26
- Breakfast with the Easter Bunny
- March 27
- Easter
- April
- April 17
- BNCOC Graduation
- Camp Rell
- April 22
- Redleg Ball
- April 28
- Take our Children to Work Day
- May
- May 20
- Armed Forces Day Luncheon
- May 21
- Armed Forces Day
- May 21
- Aviation Ball
- May 30
- Memorial Day

In future issues

- Women's History Month
- Helmets to Hardhats
- Breakfast with the Easter Bunny
- Deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month previous to publication.

Postcards Home



B Company, 189th Aviation flew the Polish Minister of Defense in Iraq. CW4 Douglas Duguay and CW4 Renato Astolfi were the pilots in the Blackhawks. (Photo courtesy CW4 Renato Astolfi)



Master Sgt. John Stone of the 143rd Area Support Group in Iraq. (Photo courtesy Master Sgt. John Stone)



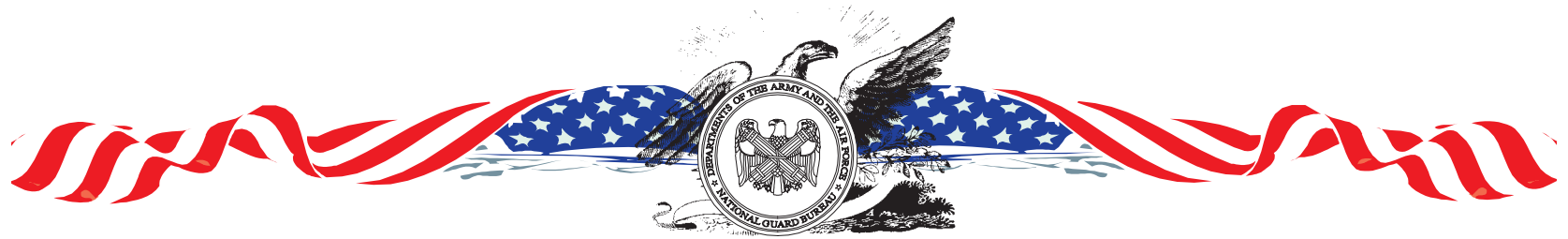
An oil fire burns brightly in Iraq. (Photo courtesy Master Sgt. John Stone)



Commanders and First Sergeants of the 36th Medical Evacuation Battalion, the higher headquarters for the 141st Medical Company in Iraq, poses for a group photo. Connecticut Soldiers are also pictured. (Photo courtesy Capt. Anne-Marie Garcia)

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
Hartford, CT
Permit No. 603





Family Deployment Supplement to the Connecticut Guardian

VOL. 6 NO. 3

HARTFORD, CT

MARCH 2005

Dad's words inspire writer

Spc. KATIE SWEENEY
143rd ASG

I was thinking what I could possibly write about, then something that has been on my mind since it was said to me jumped out, and I thought that it might be worth sharing.

My father made a comment to me before I left, he said, "Why do they have to take you away when I was just getting to know you?" My dad said this because up until I joined the Army 2 years ago, I didn't even know myself. I was lost. I had no values, no cares, nothing mattered to me except myself. My wants.

I joined the Army to become more disciplined. I needed it. I was headed down hill, fast. I can honestly say that joining the military was the best thing I have ever done.

Basic Training was a eye opener for me. In more then one sense. It taught me a lot about myself. I gained confidence, respect, motivation, and honor. Both for myself and others. I had never realized what I could achieve if I really tried. Mainly because I had never been pushed to try.

I could always talk myself out of doing something until this point. Now it was a different story. Not only did I have to watch out for myself but I had to become part of a team. Accomplishing this was amazing. Graduation day I still remember the intense look of pride in my parents eyes. I had learned who I was.

That I was worth something. I could do great things with my life. No matter how much I would have to work when I got home to accomplish them and to not fall into old habits.

My parents and I were getting along finally. Things just felt right. I felt good about just being me.



Spc. Katie Sweeney with her parents.

Almost a year later the 143 rd ASG was deployed for Operation Iraqi Freedom III. Just when things were coming together for me. For my family. I had to leave. I always knew that this was a possibility. I knew that

this was something that I needed to accept rather then whine about. I knew that this would not change me in any way except to make me that much stronger.

While I wish that I could answer my fathers

question. I can't. I can only say look at what the military has done for me, and that it is time I give something back. I know in my heart that my father will understand that.

Welcome Home 118th Medical Battalion



CATHERINE GALASSO

Perseverance is the Secret

If I had to select one attribute, one personal characteristic that I regard as being most highly interconnected with success, whatever the field, I would pick the trait of persistence.

And we appreciate each and every one of our military men and women for their persistence in protecting us and selfless commitment to our great country. The miracle that advances our dear Soldiers is found in their faith, diligence and perseverance under the promptings of a courageous, unwavering spirit.

Following our hearts is the key to motivation, but it is dogged determination and steadfast persistence to an unrelenting pursuit of our goal — a commitment to excellence — that will enable us to attain the success we seek.

In the face of difficulty or discouragement, courage and perseverance make difficulties disappear and obstacles vanish.

If it is God's will, if it will benefit others, we can achieve all that we desire if we stick to it long enough. If we don't pursue what we want, we will never attain it. If we don't ask, the answer will always be no. If we don't step forward, we'll continually be in the same place.

Of course, it's easy to persist for a short time, a few minutes or even hours. But only those who can determinately persevere for months or years while holding the belief in their heart and mind will succeed in the attainment of the desired outcome or goal.

Albert Einstein wrote, "I think and think for months and years. Ninety-nine times, the conclusion is false. The hundredth time I am right. It's not that I'm so smart, it's just that I stay with problems longer."

Genius is divine perseverance. Patience and tenacity of purpose are imperative; we have to endure to conquer. Achievement seems to be connected with action. Successful people keep moving. They make mistakes, but they don't relinquish and create new plans to take the place of those which may have not come to pass.

No matter how dim things seem to be, or actually are, they raise their sights and see the unlimited possibilities. Always look for

them, for they're there at all times. Take a step in faith. We don't have to climb the whole staircase now, just the first step.

God made each one of us to accomplish something great. Champions are made from something they have deep within them — a desire, a dream, a vision. They have stamina; they move a little faster, and have the ability and the fortitude. However, the will must be stronger than the skill.

Sometimes our greatest asset is simply our capacity to stay with it longer than anyone else. When we want something, go back and try again and go back and go back, and continue on. Many people do not realize how close they were to success when they gave up. There is no other quality as essential to achievement as the value of perseverance. Just keep knocking on doors until the right one opens.

There is nothing like the will to endure to the end, to get knocked down a hundred times and get up off the ground courageously saying, "Here comes number 101."

Persistence overcomes almost everything, even nature. Remember, rain puts a hole in stone, not because of its force, because of its constancy. Water, continually dripping, will wear a hard rock hollow. And in the confrontation between the stream and the rock, the stream always wins— not through strength but by perseverance.

Never succumb, even when people say you'll never make it. No one can make you feel inferior without your consent. We must keep away from individuals who try to belittle our ambitions. Small people always do that, but the remarkable ones make us feel that we, too, can become great.

Thank you for making the most of your God-given talents, blessing the world with them... and as Nobel Prize winner Marie Curie once said, "We must have perseverance and above all confidence in ourselves. We must believe we are gifted for something, and that this thing, must be attained."

God bless you, dear Soldiers.

Write to Catherine Galasso-Vigorito, nationally syndicated columnist and author of "A New You, Words to Soothe the Body, Mind and Spirit," in care of Connecticut Guardian, 360 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06105-3795 or e-mail her at anewyou@snet.net © Catherine Galasso, 2004

Scam targets families of servicemembers killed in action

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS
SERVICE

WASHINGTON, Feb. 22, 2005 — Officials with the Department of Homeland Security are warning the public about two new Iraq-related Internet scams, including one directed at the relatives of fallen U.S. soldiers.

"These new Internet fraud schemes are among the worst we have ever encountered," said Michael J. Garcia, assistant secretary of homeland security for immigration and customs enforcement. "Most troubling is the fact that some are targeting the relatives of U.S. soldiers killed in Iraq. We are also concerned about the fact that these criminals are impersonating (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) agents and referring to ICE's official Web site in an effort to steal money from Americans who have lost loved ones."

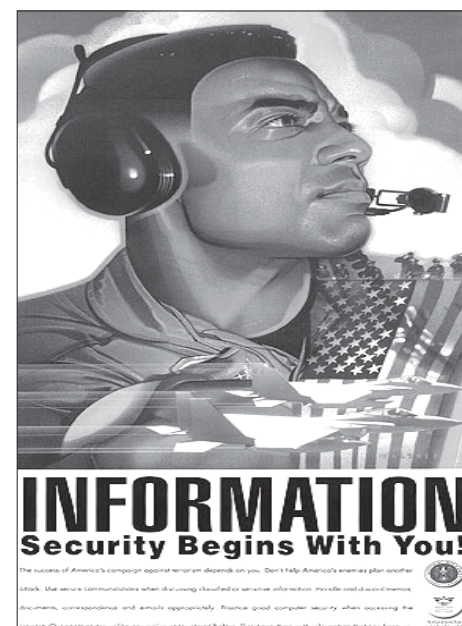
The first scheme involves e-mail sent to relatives of U.S. soldiers killed in Iraq. Claiming to be a volunteer working with U.S. forces, the sender states that a late friend, who also was a U.S. soldier killed in Iraq, was a very good friend of the relatives' slain son or daughter. The sender then goes on to ask for assistance in obtaining funds kept for them by the deceased friend, promising more details when the relative responds to the e-mail. The sender then adds a link to the portion of Immigration and Customs Enforcement's actual Web site discussing ICE operations in Iraq.

In the second scheme, a blanket e-mail is being distributed that claims to be from an Immigration and Customs Enforcement

official in Iraq who is responsible for tracking down funds looted from the Iraqi Central Bank by Saddam Hussein's son. The sender lists ICE's Web site address in the e-mail in an effort to seem credible. The sender then asks for confirmation of the e-mail address of the recipient, stating, "there is a very important and confidential matter which I want us both to discuss."

The ICE Cyber Crimes Center in northern Virginia, in conjunction with the ICE Office of Professional Responsibility here, is investigating the schemes. Those who receive the bogus e-mail solicitations should ignore and delete them, Garcia said.

(From a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement news release.)



HANDYPERSON HOTLINE

"CARRYING THE HOMEFRONT"

**SERGEANT MAJOR
TOBY P. CORMIER**
Ph: 860-441-2984
Cell: 860-209-0770
toby.cormier@ct.ngb.army.mil



Visit the
Connecticut Guardian
on-line at www.ct.ngb.army.mil



CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD FAMILY PROGRAM YOUTH PROGRAM



The Connecticut National Guard Youth Program would like to invite all children ages 9-13 to participate in a Youth Program event.

Build and launch a rocket!!



Children must bring a
Bag Lunch
NO LUNCH WILL BE
PROVIDED

Date: March 12, 2005
Time: 9:00am-3:00pm
Place: 251 Maxim Rd,
Hartford, CT



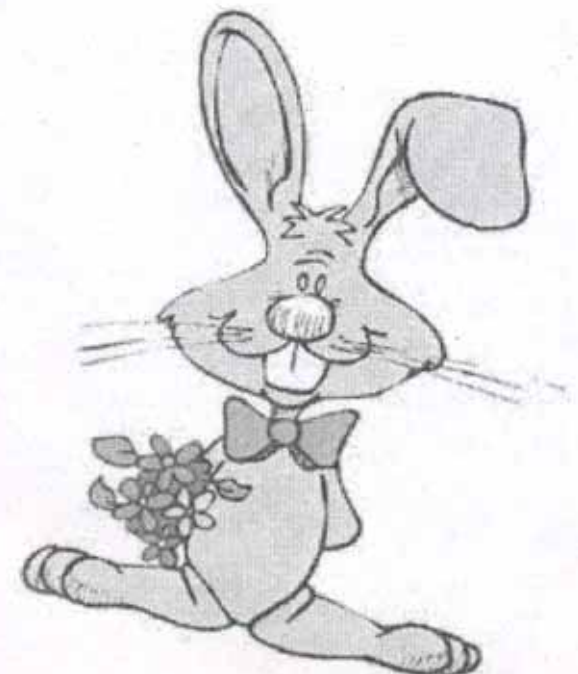
*** Limit of 30 Children ***
RSVP ASAP to Melissa Tetro
860-878-6745

Parents must transport children to and from event. No transportation is provided.

Now Ear' this!

Breakfast with the Easter Bunny & Easter Egg Hunt

You are cordially invited to Camp Rell, Niantic, CT on Saturday, March 26th, 2005 for Breakfast and an Egg Hunt with the Easter Bunny. The breakfast begins at 0900 followed by egg hunts for children from ages 1 to 10. Adults please bring your Photo ID to enter Camp Rell and a basket or bag for your child to collect eggs in. Please call the Family Program Office at **800-858-2677** to make your reservations prior to March 18th, 2005.



Family Assistance Center locations

Family Assistance Centers are set-up in the following armories around the state:

Bristol Armory
61 Center Street, Bristol, CT 06010
(860) 582-1206 Toll Free 866-347-2283
Sgt. Michael Bertoli

Waterbury Armory
64 Field Street, Waterbury, CT 06702
(203) 574-2406 Toll Free 866-347-2291
Sgt. Jonathon Duffy & Spec. Tamara Jex

Manchester Armory & AVCRAD
330 Main Street, Manchester, CT 06040
(860) 646-0780 Toll Free 866-347-2286 Capt. Lauri Tinelle

103rd FW, Bradley ANG Base
Bldg 8, East Granby, CT 06026
(860) 292-2730 Mrs. Donna Rivera

Hartford Armory
360 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06105-3795
1-800-858-2677
Mrs. Kim Hoffman, Mrs. Michelle McCarty, Mrs. Karen Somes,
OC Claude Hibbert and Sgt. Jessica McKenna

Norwich Armory
38 Stott Avenue, Norwich, CT 06360
(860) 823-1342 Ext. 12 Toll Free 866-347-3357
Mrs. Andrea Lathrop

103rd Air Control Squadron
206 Boston Post Road, Orange, CT 06477
(203) 795-2983 Charlie and Jane Solomon

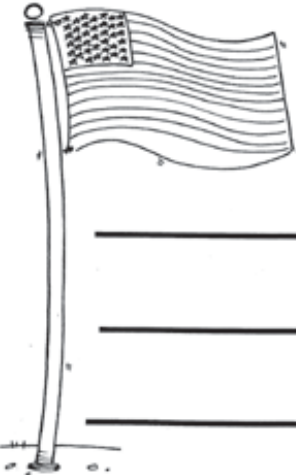
New Britain Armory
855 Stanley Street, New Britain, CT 06053
Sgt. Elizabeth Crouthamel (860) 883-6935

Volunteers are needed in each facility.
Those wishing to help out can contact Mrs. Kim Hoffman, Family
Program Manager at 1-800-858-2677.

Any family member or loved one of a deployed soldier who has
questions about benefits or deployment issues may also get answers
to their question at the following email address:
kim.hoffman@ct.ngb.army.mil

HOW MANY WORDS CAN YOU MAKE?

Our national anthem, The Star-Spangled Banner, is about the
American flag. See how many words you can make using the letters in
"THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER"



Answer: led, bad, red, read, bed, bid, then, ten, bone, bar, year, pear, paid, her,
near, here, set, seed, there, rear, clear, dare, one, heed, hood, real.

Kids' Creative Corner

A MONTHLY FEATURE OF
FUN AND EDUCATIONAL
ACTIVITIES